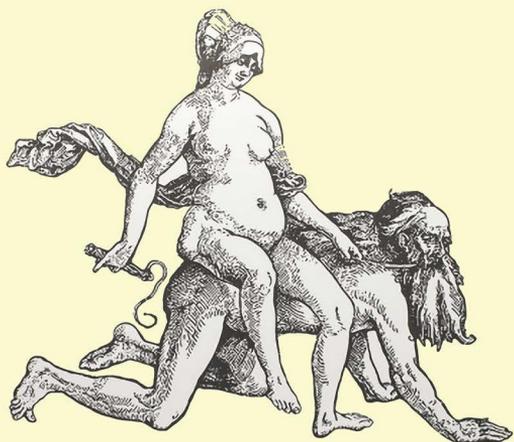


# On the Physiological Idiocy of Women



**Sex and Immodesty**  
*A Commentary on*  
*Otto Weininger's*  
**Sex and Character**

**On the Moral Idiocy**  
**of Women**  
**Katinka von Rosen**



**Paul Julius Möbius**

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**ISBN 978-1-008-99650-2**

Published: February 2021

Cover pictures:

Left – Phyllis and Aristotle, Hans Baldung, 1515

Right – Gibson, Rival Beauties, in Eduard Fuchs' *Die Frau in der Karikatur* (1906)

Back cover:

Paul Julius Möbius, taken from Wikipedia

Biographical information provided in the footnotes regarding the individuals referenced by Möbius and von Rosen are taken from Wikipedia.

Translation: /BMW/

*Egalitarianism is evil everywhere, but gender egalitarianism is a particularly great evil.*

Paul Julius Mobius

*The fundamental defect of the female character is a lack of a sense of justice. This originates first and foremost in their want of rationality and capacity for reflection but it is strengthened by the fact that, as the weaker sex, they are driven to rely not on force but on cunning: hence their instinctive subtlety and their ineradicable tendency to tell lies: for, as Nature has equipped the lion with claws and teeth, the elephant with tusks, the wild boar with fangs, the bull with horns and the cuttlefish with ink, so it has equipped woman with the power of dissimulation as her means of attack and defense, and has transformed into this gift all the strength it has bestowed on man in the form of physical strength and the power of reasoning. Dissimulation is thus inborn in her and consequently to be found in the stupid woman almost as often as in the clever one. To make use of it at every opportunity is as natural to her as it is for an animal to employ its means of defense whenever it is attacked, and when she does so she feels that to some extent she is only exercising her rights. A completely truthful woman who does not practice dissimulation is perhaps an impossibility, which is why women see through the dissimulation of others so easily it is inadvisable to attempt it with them. – But this fundamental defect which I have said they possess, together with all that is associated with it, gives rise to falsity, unfaithfulness, treachery, ingratitude, etc.*

*Women are guilty of perjury far more often than men. It is questionable whether they ought to be allowed to take an oath at all.*

Arthur Schopenhauer, *On Women*

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# **On the Physiological Idiocy of Women**

**Paul Julius Möbius**

## Preface to the 1903 edition

My opponents have become fairly quiet. They must have realized that caution is the better part of bravery here, and after bad experiences they would like to keep me dead silent. I'm sorry, because I would have loved to come up with new reviews à la Dohm [Hedwig Dohm, a stalwart of the women's movement at the time<sup>1</sup>], but what should I do?

In my essay I said that it is reasonable that the law should treat women differently from men, given the mental difference between the sexes. From the legal side, I have received various approvals and I hope that my request will be met in the future. Equal rights for all is the greatest injustice. If the 17-year-old youth is treated more mildly than the man, then the woman must also be granted protection. I come back to these thoughts because a French book inspired me.

Dr. Paul Dubuisson, senior physician at the Sainte-Anne insane asylum in Paris and a forensic surgeon, has written a very interesting book about department store thieves<sup>2</sup>.

Not a day goes by when the Paris criminal chambers do not have to judge a woman who is accused of stealing in the Bon-Marché, the Louvre or the Printemps. If one considers that only a small part of these thefts are discovered, one understands that there is a significant phenomenon here. The astonishment grows when one learns that almost all department store thieves neither steal out of necessity nor belong to the habitual criminals, that they mainly belong to the wealthy and honorable middle class.

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<sup>1</sup> All passages in brackets [] are the translators' doing.

<sup>2</sup> *Les Voleuses des Grands Magasins*. Paris, A. Storck et Comp.

The department store thieves are marked as follows: they only steal in department stores; Most of them are well off, some even rich, so they could very well buy the things; the stolen objects are usually not necessary to them, since they often already have the items, indeed in abundance. When arrested, they usually admit the theft without further ado, not infrequently with a kind of sigh of relief, as if a burden were being removed from them. Many of them tell, without being asked about it, about similar thefts in the past and state that they will find such and such stolen things in their homes. In fact, a house search reveals such items which have been cleverly hidden, unused, often still labeled with the department store label, in cupboards, in dark corners, under the cover of upholstered furniture, and which can only be found with the thief's help. All of them agreed: "I couldn't resist – I lost my head – it all seemed to belong to me – I got more and more pleasure – if I hadn't been arrested, I would have taken more and more..." , etc.

How can you explain all these oddities? Obviously two things have to be taken into account, firstly the nature of the department store, and secondly those who were seduced therein. Today's department store is a masterpiece, because its owners have arranged everything with wonderful skill in such a way that the temptation to buy couldn't be greater. They tempt the visitors with absolutely ingenious art. Hardly ever a woman who went in with the determination not to buy anything comes out without a number of parcels. First, the desire is awakened by brochures and price lists, which are sent lavishly to the houses, and from which the readers gain the conviction that the purchase must be pure profit under the specified conditions. Soon the idea comes to them: there is no harm in going there, you can see it, admission is free, you don't have to buy it right away. Once the unfortunate woman is in the lion's den, she will be enchanted. At the sight of this overabundance of beautiful

and good things, all desires for comfort, elegance, possessions awakened, and the female desire for pleasure is deeply aroused. The visitor can touch and turn all the delights at will, which is a pleasure in itself, because nobody asks or seems to care, she can even have the object of her desire sent to her house for a few days to view. The tempter has done even more, for the ladies, who are not supposed to be tired, have halls with benches in which journals, even food and drinks are offered free of charge. The visitor should feel in the department store as in her home, only that everything is infinitely bigger, more beautiful, richer, that no effort is waiting for her, that everything is politeness, kindness. The department store employs the most pleasant and amiable young men it can get.

Only a few can resist all these temptations; most are seduced into purchases that not infrequently meet no need and exceed the available means. Many women are attracted to the department store as others are to the church, because here as there they find sweet excitement, even if the kind is different. Some fall in love with one of these caravanserais and can no longer live without visiting the Louvre, the Bon Marché or the Printemps every day or at least once a week. A young woman, who had just recovered from a serious illness, furiously required to go to a department store, went there, and died after a few days. She did not want to buy anything, but she longed for the atmosphere of her temple and for the sight of the beautiful things. Finally, it must be considered that the ladies exposed to temptation are deliberately made to think that they are completely unattended. When the visitor has found her goods, she calls one of the employees who has to lead her to the cashier, but who does not exercise any supervision. Only covertly a number of employees, who do not carry any sign, watch the buyers; nothing warns them, only after the theft the supervisor intervenes.

Despite all this, no honorable woman will steal. Unfortunately, experience shows that a lot of women, who were considered honorable and untouchable, get trapped. One might think that only after a fierce battle between good and evil thoughts this defeat is possible, and certainly sometimes such a battle takes place, but quite often, according to the confessions of the thieves, the matter has gone differently. The desire appears at once so violently that the hand grasps before the head has thought. Afterwards, remorse may come, but even this does not always seem to be bad.

Apart from the professional thieves, who occasionally steal in the department store just as they usually do, and who are not very frequent, the department store thieves fall into two groups, namely into those who, although they are considered honorable, are morally weak without being ill in the narrower sense of the word, and into those in whom certain pathological conditions can be proven.

Although the psychological interest is predominantly in the first group, the physician can only report on those who have been assigned to him because of a doubtful mental condition. Dubuisson reports from personal experience about 120 cases. Among them were eight women suffering from the so-called cerebral softening (progressive paralysis) and three with other severe brain conditions. In nine of them the doctor could not find anything pathological. Of the remaining hundred thieves, nine were insane in the strict sense of the word (pathologically feeble-minded, insane, etc.). All the others were what is usually called mentally ill; they suffered from nervous weakness, from hysteria, and a part of these nervous persons was at the time of the criminal act in one of the critical times of female life (menstruation, pregnancy). Of course, a nervous disease does not directly drive to theft, but it reduces the willpower, it makes one inclined to intoxicating states, and as a rule, with the same

moral dispositions, the sick person will succumb to temptation more easily than the healthy one.

In all this, it should not be overlooked that there is no gap between the so-called healthy and those whose illness should reduce their sanity. Imperceptible transitions lead from simple moral weakness to pathological incapacity to resist. There are probably degrees of temptation that no one is equal to, and in any case the number of victims corresponds to the size of the temptation. The modern department store is simply too great a temptation for part of the female population, because its facilities tempt them to steal. But one should try to prevent evil, and in our case this would not even be difficult. All that is needed is a constant warning against stealing by visible guards who can be recognized by certain signs. Then many women, whose state of mind protects them from stumbling in ordinary life, but who are not able to cope with the excessive temptations of the storehouse, would be saved, and with them their families would be spared sorrow and disgrace.

For those caught, in whom mental disorders could not be proven, they were simply locked up as thieves. If the authorities had an understanding of the female state of mind, they would either not have to tolerate the department stores that present themselves as women's traps, or they would not have to hand over the individuals seduced to the strictness of the law.

It seems to me that this story with the department stores is quite a good example, and that one sees thereby how the physiological idiocy is to be taken seriously. Egalitarianism is evil everywhere, but gender egalitarianism is a particularly great evil.

Leipzig, November 1903.

## Preface to the 1904 edition

I like to be taught, and I do like a book from which I can learn something. That's why I've read a lot of feminist books in recent years. Of course I experienced a lot of disappointments and, if space allowed, I could tell a lot of painful things. I will only give one example. Marie Stritt translated a book by Charlotte Perkins-Stetson (*Women and Economics*), which she calls a standard work along with Mill's book: *The Bible of the Women's Movement*. The original seems to have appeared in 1899, the translation is entitled *Man and Woman* (Dresden and Leipzig, H. Minden). Oh, I thought, that will be a good thing, and found something downright gruesome. The short meaning of the long explanations is that when the woman earns money herself, the evils that oppress us will disappear. Basically, the goal is not difficult to achieve, because if you no longer cook at home and take the (one would think, actually superfluous) children to an infant home, the woman can go into business as well as the man. One stands admiringly before this American wisdom. It would be fine if the author presented her nonsense in simple words, but no, she proceeds "scientifically", works with "sociology" like a savage swings his club, and presents the greatest fabrications as reliable knowledge. It assumes that in animals every female seeks her own food, but in humans the man nourishes the woman. The sentence is by no means right, because as much the farmer as the farmer's wife e. g. both work and acquire food. As far as the sentence is correct, however, the matter can be explained very simply by the long need for care of human children, on the one hand, by the increase in tasks beyond the foraging for food that is allowed by the far greater intellectual abilities or the far greater brain of the man, and the necessity of the division of labor that this brings about on the other hand. That sounds very prosaic compared to the fairy

tales of the author, who seems to pay homage to a Darwinism gone mad. According to her, the woman was originally everything, the man only an appendage, only there for the sake of procreation. She thinks of the little male among the spiders, which is occasionally eaten by the female, and seems to suspect that humans are descended from spiders. Only gradually did the man develop, and "the last stage of this development process was the elevation of the male of the genus *homo* to full equality with the female, which then even resulted in his temporary subordination" (p. 115). In any case, the human woman was originally just as skilled and strong as the man. Once, however, it occurred to the poor fellow, the man, to subjugate the woman and restrict her to sexual activity, and misfortune wanted him to succeed in this shameful deed. When this was no longer the case, women became "economically dependent," and that led to the degeneration – and the degeneracy<sup>3</sup> – of the human race, but especially of the female sex. Woman lost part of her qualities and was "undoubtedly far too much and downright pathologically sexually corrupt." Since woman does not produce, but only consumes, she becomes careless, greedy, wasteful, overestimates the external and the physical, and lures the man into it too. Anyway, the man gradually degraded, for he had bred a pure sexual being in the woman and was now so excited by it that he became a victim of his exaggerated sexual instinct. In contrast to animals, the excess of the sexual instinct is a property of man (the author has completely forgotten the decent apes). Then the author thinks of the inheritance that the girls also inherit from the father, and so on; and now a very horrible confusion begins, which I cannot go into portraying. But always in the terribly prolix discussions the leitmotif recurs: all social ills are the consequence of economic marriage. "Every

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<sup>3</sup> *Entartung* will be translated as 'degeneration' to signify a biological or physiological phenomenon, and as 'degeneracy' to signify a moral phenomenon. T/N

single woman, born as a human being, with the urge inherited from her father for the actuation of her human faculties in her veins, and at the same time born as a woman, under the oppressive burden of her traditional position, must undergo in her own person the same process of subjugation, suppression, abjuration of her generally human nature, for each one sounded the painful "no" which was to stifle all her urges to learn, to create, to discover, to express herself, to advance" (p. 65). "On distant prairies or in disconnected homes, where women today are still completely confined in the oppressive bonds of sex, they go mad over it by the dozens and hundreds" (p. 228). Oh! The economic dependence of women is the cause of the decline in the birth rate (p. 147). Oh! Oh! But all these abominations are to be thoroughly remedied by the American ladies. The greatest and most significant transformation the world has ever witnessed, the gradual rising of the downtrodden woman to full human equality, is now taking place (p. 126). Praise and glory of the American magnificence follows; by the woman's entering into the life of gainful employment, all becomes new, all becomes good. The human soul is purified, and the female brain is transformed. Even the poor little children come off better, because the new woman has "in the bringing forth (!), care and education of the offspring much better, finer, and more effective methods (p. 138)" than the former women, who were really only "tender guinea pigs." - The foregoing will sufficiently show how feminist scientism stands. As it is said in Faust.

*There's much more still, no less mysterious,  
I know it well, the whole book sounds just so!  
I've lost full many a year in poring o'er it,*

Quite a few reviews that I get to read are below what one can ask for. People ask themselves whether I am impolite, ungallant, an enemy of women, whether some things could not be expressed more mildly, whether individual women do not

quite correspond to my description, whether I am not doing unjustified teleology, and more of that useless blabber. But they do not go into my train of thought. Women are more sparsely endowed with intellectual abilities than men and are more likely to lose them. This state is present from the start and cannot be changed. The equalization leads to damage to society, because it affects not only the health of women, but also the quality and number of children. It can be seen that the real controversy revolves around the "a priori and immutable." Because my description applies to the average member of the present generation, a fact admitted by those who understand anyway. Now I do not deny that changes are possible through arbitrariness or in the natural course of things. The only question is how big the changes can be, whether the existing mental differences between the sexes can be changed through upbringing or in some other way only in minor matters, or also significantly. If one points to the past, i.e. towards human history, so it can be said, yes, that external circumstances were unfavorable then. Only the future will show what women can achieve, but one has to be patient. So the negotiation goes back and forth. To bring life into it, one should look for new ways. One of them seems to me to still be little used; I mean the observation of the mental differences between the sexes in the higher animals, in mammals and birds, not in bees and spiders. If it turns out that the differences that we find today in humans are also present in the upper animals, then one can assume that it is a problem that can hardly be removed, for what has been preserved through countless millennia will probably withstand modern education. Of course, it would be very difficult to collect enough material. I have tried to do so, but so far have not found anything useful, for it is astonishing how little the observers have paid attention to the mental differences between the sexes in animals (apart from the love life, of course). Good observations can be found sporadically here and

there, but without larger series it will not work. Perhaps one could also make special experiments, as an American recently tried with a pair of rhesus monkeys. –

Now something more cheerful. I draw your attention to the French criticism attached to the appendix and to the letters from Sweden there<sup>4</sup>. The French wordsmith sees in me, poor man, a type of new German brutality; this is an example of the silliness political hatred can lead to. The letters from Sweden are even more fun. For half a year I have been receiving a letter from women from Sweden about every four weeks; so far there have been six. Everyone's handwriting is a little different, everyone's language mistakes are a little different, but the same thoughts keep coming back (to be said with respect), and there is a primeval rudeness everywhere. There must be nice ladies in Sweden, and I think these maenads [women who participated in the orgiastic cult of Dionysus in Greek mythology] formed a circle to bombard me with letters of abuse. Should the great evolution of our ladies lead to a similar height as the Swedes have reached, I can hide away. And yet I can't blame myself other than for speaking too gently!

Leipzig, in the late autumn of 1904.

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<sup>4</sup> The second part of the Appendix, *Opposing discussions*, has not been included in this translation. T/N

## Preface to the eighth edition (1906)

What has come to light from the opposing side since the 7<sup>th</sup> edition is so silly that it would be a waste of time to go into it. On the other hand, I can point out various new confirmations. A new major paper on brain weighing has appeared from Marchand's Institute<sup>5</sup>. It confirms the earlier statements. Here are a few sentences: The mean brain weight of the male newborn is 400 g, that of the female 380 g, that of the adult man 1370 g, that of the woman 1223 g (this applies to the lower strata of the Saxon population). Without exception, the mean brain weight of women is less than that of men of the same size. The claim that women have a relatively larger brain weight than men is wrong. Then Beyerthal<sup>6</sup> and Röse<sup>7</sup> found through studies in schools that the heads of boys are consistently larger than those of girls, and that in all years, although girls from 11 years of age or earlier outnumber boys in size and weight. A French book that has been sent to me with the title: *Le Mensonge du Féminisme*<sup>8</sup> [*The Lie of Feminism*], is initially directed at French conditions, but also contains many good things for us. Social discussions are not my business, but I will at least refer to the excellent study by Elon Wikmark<sup>9</sup> of the situation in Scandinavia. Even in North America people seem to be afraid of female glory and realize that modern women are ruining the classes of society to which they belong. That much is hinted at

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<sup>5</sup> Handmann. E., *About the weight of the human brain*. Arch. of Anat. and Physiol. (anat. dept.) 1, page 1, 1906.

<sup>6</sup> Annual report on the school medical work in the auxiliary classes of the municipal elementary school in Worms (school year 1904/05).

<sup>7</sup> *Contributions to European racial studies*. Arch. of Racial and Social Biology II, page 689, 1905; III, page 42, 1906.

<sup>8</sup> by Théodore Joran, Paris. H. Jouve.

<sup>9</sup> *The Woman Question*, C. Marhold, Halle, 1905.

by various articles in magazines, as well as the president's warning.

I have reread some of the ladies' books, and if space permits I could make some remarks about them similar to those I did last time about Mrs. Perkins-Stetson. It is peculiar that even unusually gifted female writers, if they are not content with storytelling, do more harm than good. They do not really know what really matters, and at the crucial moment they fail to judge. Ellen Key e.g. is undoubtedly a very capable woman in her own way, yet what dreadful things she has written about love and marriage. If their proposals were implemented, it would be an unforeseeable misfortune for the female sex. As a woman, the author falls into ecstasy at the word "love", and she only has idealized people in front of her, does not know real people or does not want to know them. Other words also have an intoxicating effect on female writers: "culture," "development," "reform," "personality." That makes a sound and then rustles, but there's nothing behind it. One can understand that such "essays" (or whatever they are called) from a female pen are applauded by the easily infatuated sex, but the fact that more than a few men applaud them, that is a bad omen. It's probably the same half-men who write against me. They recently came up with a trick that I've come across a couple of times. It is said that one should not judge the mental differences between the sexes. One shouldn't listen to Kant, Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Nietzsche and other blockheads, one should only expect clarification from "scientific psychology," and one should decently not talk about it at all before the matter has been sufficiently worked out in the laboratory. As always, the appeal to "science" is likely to resonate with enlightened schoolmen, loyal supporters of science, and others. So far nothing new has been found through experimentation, but only what one already knew has been determined more precisely; but of course there would be nothing objectionable to

the processing of our question in the laboratory. Helene Bradford Thompson has already shown how not to do it (see p. 6). I myself have an inexpressible respect for "scientific psychology" and diligently read the investigations carried out in accordance with it (so that I am not forced to do so in purgatory or a similar place), but I have not yet felt the calling in me to deliver experimental work myself. One must have a special disposition for these undoubtedly meritorious investigations, and I do not think that I will be able to develop it in myself. However, even without the tools and methods of the laboratory, one can make some kind of psychological experiment by asking certain questions to be examined. I want to share a modest venture of this kind here because I enjoyed it myself. I put two questions to 30 women, namely 1. How many people are in Leipzig? and 2. What is the distance between Leipzig and Dresden in kilometers? The following table contains the answers:

Number	Age	Standing and education	Inhabitants in Leipzig	How many km between Leipzig and Dresden

Nr	Alter	Stand u. Bildung	Einwohner Leipzigs?	Wieviele km zwischen Leipzig und Dresden?
1	13 Jahre	Schülerin, Lehrerstochter	5000, (Lachen) od. 10000 (Lachen) oder 40000	Keine Ahnung!
2	14 "	Höh.Mädchenschule	500000	40-50
3	14 "	" "	40 Millionen	Keine Ahnung!
4	15 "	" "	75 Millionen, (Lachen) nein 15 Millionen	" "
5	15 "	" "	550000	" "
6	16 "	" "	8000 oder 80000	14
7	16 "	" "	50 Millionen	Keine Ahnung!
8	17 "	nur Volksschule	4 Millionen	20
9	17 "	Höh.Mädchenschule	500000	Keine Ahnung!
10	18 "	" "	40000	" "
11	18 "	" "	Keine Ahnung!	" "
12	19 "	?, aus guter Familie	etwas mit 5, vielleicht 500000?	" "
13	20 "	Höh.Mädchenschule	Keine Ahnung!	12
14	20 "	" "	100000	Keine Ahnung!
15	21 "	" "	1 1/2 Millionen	200 km
16	20 "	aus guter Familie	1 Million oder es fehlt nicht viel	60
17	25 "	" "	unbekannt	unbekannt
18	26 "	Höh.Mädchenschule	"	"
19	29 "	nur Volksschule	wenigst. e. paar Tausend	"
20	30 "	Ehefrau i. Auslande erzogen	beinahe 1/2 Million	ca 50 (ich würde es wissen, wenn ich wüßte, wie lange man geht)
21	30 "	Mädchen, hat Medicin studiert	über 1/2 Million	200
22	30 "	Ehefrau, Lehrerstochter	1 Million	Keine Ahnung!
23	36 "	Ehefrau, Fortbildungsschule	500000	90 (berechnet nach Radfahrtrout nach Wurzen)
24	36 "	" "	Keine Ahnung!	Keine Ahnung!
25	37 "	Ehefrau, Höhere Mädchenschule	1 Million	" "
26	37 "	" "	Keine Ahnung!	" "
27	40 "	" "	130000	" "
28	40 "	Mädchen aus guter Familie	500000	500 oder 8000?
29	40 "	Ehefrau, Fortbildungsschule	1 Million	Keine Ahnung!
30	46 "	Ehefrau, Höhere Mädchenschule	300000	(wie lange geht man an 1 km? 1 Stunde

Control experiment.

Both questions have been submitted to an 8<sup>th</sup> grade class.

Nr.	Einwohner Leipzigs	Leipzig - Dresden
1	506000	115 km
2	503637	Altstadt 119,7 km Neustadt 115,8 „
3	500000	150 km
4	509000	120 „
5	506000	112 „
6	500000	117 „
7	503792	140 „
8	500000	110 „
9	504600	112 „
10	509734	115,9 „
11	505000	125 „
12	500000	100 „
13	505000	113 „
14	500000	125 „
15	506400	115 „
16	ca. 506000	ca. 200 „
17	625000	115 „
18	450000	115 „
19	etwas über 500000	105 „
20	560000	115 „
21	500000	115,9 „

So, to the first question (according to the first table) only five (if one judges indulgently, six) answered correctly. Quite a few answers were completely nonsensical and indicated mere guesswork. It should be noted that there was a census last winter, and that the result, as far as our town is concerned, has certainly been discussed in almost all families. People are proud of it when their place of residence grows, as if they derived some income from it, and the news that Leipzig had half a million inhabitants was a general delight. It is all the more strange that at least four fifths of the female population do not seem to know the correct number.

For the second question I would not have known the correct number (114 km) from the start. But I would have said to

myself, you can walk the kilometer in 10-12 minutes, the express train goes ten times faster, so it covers 50-60 km in 1 hour, it drives to Dresden in two hours, so it has to be around 120 km. I now wanted to know whether these ladies would come up with similar considerations. Only one made the right approach. Two cyclists tried at least an estimate. One of them answered my question: "How could you then find out?" cold-headed: "Well, you look it up." Most of them either "had no idea" or guessed it.

If the great ignorance which is revealed in the answers also seems to cast a peculiar light on our much-vaunted schools, it is certainly not a sign of stupidity, for among the interviewees were women and girls, of whom I know that they are quite clever in their circle. The main thing is that the female mind has a natural abhorrence of precise measurements; numbers are hated by women as well as by poets who are related to them. The only numbers you are sure to remember are the ones you need for your outfit (skirt length, waist size, etc.); the rest is forgotten, and the school's efforts cannot change that. The conception of spatial relationships is also often inadequate, and it is not all too rare to find women who even struggle with telling right from left.

Among the letters of the eighth edition are a new letter from a professor (p. 144), to which I draw special attention as a very important contribution, the valuable report of a pastor (p. 147), and that of a well-meaning reader (p. 149).

Leipzig, June 1906.

## A. Part one

One can speak of the physiological idiocy<sup>10</sup> of women<sup>11</sup> in two senses.

### I

It is not easy to say what idiocy is. One can say: that which lies between stupidity and normal verbal behavior. However, the difficulty lies in the demarcation between stupidity and normal behavior. For the latter we do not even have a German word, for *health* is by no means the appropriate term; *sensible* refers to the senses, not to meaning; *perceptive* means a development of the meaning beyond the norm; *straightforward*

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<sup>10</sup> "Schwachsinn" can be translated by feeble-mindedness, imbecility, or idiocy. The term 'idiocy' – just like the term 'moron' – has a medical origin that has been lost in today's vernacular. 'Idiot' and 'moron' were terms used by physicians and the like to sort people according to their intellectual capacities, just like we can sort people by IQ without implying a moral or value judgement. When the author speaks of the 'idiocy' of women, he means from a purely quantitative standpoint, not from a qualitative one. "With the words "physiological idiocy of women" I denote the fact that all brain functions of the healthy woman are lesser than that of the healthy man, if one disregards the love of children." In short, he is critiquing, not criticizing. T/N.

<sup>11</sup> It is completely inappropriate to use the term "woman" [as in "lady." "Frau" and "Weib" both mean 'woman' in German] to designate gender. Woman [Frau] is the honorific form of address and means mistress, lady, but according to our linguistic usage only the married woman may be called woman [Frau]. When one speaks of the woman question, care for women, etc., one means primarily the affairs of women [as in "females," Weiber], who are not women [Frauen], for women [Frauen] do not need to be provided for, etc., but rather single women and widows; one thus expresses oneself incorrectly. Man stands opposite woman [Weib], and the plural is not called women ["ladies," Frauen], but women ["females," Weiber]. If women [Weiber] should be ashamed of their name, that is bad enough, but no reason to abuse the language.

refers to moral behavior. In ordinary life we have the opposites: clever and stupid; clever is one who can distinguish, the stupid one lacks the critical faculty. In fact, there should be no essential difference between stupidity and the light forms of idiocy. One should not object that stupidity is healthy, idiocy pathological, because this contradiction is popular in a wrong sense and is basically based on the unseemly interference of value judgments. From a scientific point of view, common stupidity can be just as much a pathological deviation as abnormal shortness or poor sightedness, etc. On the other hand, there really is a physiological idiocy, since the child is imbecile in comparison with the adult and since one cannot call growing old a disease (in spite of the saying *senectus ipsa morbus* [old age itself is a disease]), but with growing old a decrease in mental capacity occurs sooner or later. Incidentally, language also uses the word stupid in the case of pathological changes: he has become stupid through drinking, or through a fevered illness. However, even if we count stupidity as idiocy, the difficulty is not removed because the upper limit of stupidity is not fixed. In a certain sense everyone is stupid, one in music, another in mathematics, this one in languages, that one in trade and commerce, and so on. One would therefore have to distinguish between partial and general idiocy. One will quite rightfully say that, yes, special talents do not count, one only needs to have good abilities on average. That's just it, what does the average mean, how to determine the norm? Here, as everywhere in the determination of subtler pathological forms, which cannot be done with the rough data of the ordinary clinic, we come up against the lack of an intellectual canon. For the bodily forms we have a canon and can easily determine whether this or that number of centimeters is still normal, but for the mental abilities a rule is missing; here arbitrariness rules. One thinks only of the differences of the expertise in doubtful cases. It would be foolish to claim that the uncertainty that now

prevails is necessary, because one cannot draw boundaries where in reality there are none. The matter is not so bad, if one only makes an effort, one will already succeed in establishing an approximate canon and to limit the uncertainty, even eliminate it altogether. In general, and also with regard to idiocy, the right way should be that one no longer speaks simply of people, but of certain types of people, that one asks what one can ask of this age, this gender, this people. The normal behavior of the child is pathological to the adult, that of the woman to the man, that of the Negro to the European. Comparison of different groups is the main thing, because only in this way one can find out what is to be expected from a member of a certain group, only in this way one can avoid calling a man stupid or feeble-minded, because he cannot perform what any other man can. In other words, idiocy is a relation, and idiocy can only have meaning in comparison with one's own kind. If one may not measure the member of one group against that of another, one may contrast the groups themselves. An Eskimo who cannot count to a hundred is not an idiot as an Eskimo, but because it is so, the Eskimo as such is an idiot in comparison with the German or Frenchman. How is it now with the sexes? It is certain from the outset that the male and female mental abilities are very different, but does a balance take place in such a way that the women perform better here, the men there, or are women as a whole moronic in comparison to men? The proverb is of the latter opinion, because it says: 'long hair, short mind,' but modern understanding does not want to know anything about it; for it the female mind is at least equal to the male one. A sea of ink has been spilled over these things and yet there is no question of agreement and clarity. The best summary I know is the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the book by Ferrero and Lombroso<sup>12</sup>, which deals with the normal woman. Of course, I

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<sup>12</sup> *The Woman as Criminal and Prostitute*, C. Lombroso and G. Ferrero, Deutsch von Kurella, Hamburg, 1894.

cannot agree with all the individual statements of the authors, nor adopt all their constructions, but on the whole, the proof of the mental inferiority of the woman is very well shown here. The description of the Italians covers 192 printed pages and is nevertheless aphoristic. If one wanted to proceed thoroughly, a thick book would result. It is therefore understandable that I can only hint at the most important things here.

One will always do well to take both the direct and the indirect path, i.e. to refer not only to psychological but also to anatomical observations.

Physically, apart from the sexual characteristics, the female is an intermediate between child and man, and mentally she is also, at least in many respects. In detail, of course, there are differences. In the child the head is relatively larger than in the man, in the woman the head is not only absolutely but also relatively smaller<sup>13</sup>. A small head naturally also encloses a small brain, but here, as well as against Bischoff's brain analyses, one can use the excuse that a small brain can be just as valuable as a large one, since it can contain the parts important for mental life just as well. Therefore, the comparative studies of individual parts of the brain are more important, at least more convincing. Here especially the results of Rüdinger come into consideration, which do not seem to me to be as well-known as they deserve to be. Rüdinger<sup>14</sup> has demonstrated on delivered newborns that "the whole group of convolutions framing the Sylvian fissure is simpler and less curved in the girl than in the boy"; that "the

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<sup>13</sup> It is not uncommon for me to find a head circumference of 51 cm in average-sized women. Such a thing does not occur with men who are mentally normal, only with pathological imbeciles, idiots. Those women, however, are quite clever in their own way. (If a mentally nearly healthy man has a 51 cm head circumference, it is a tower head, i.e. an abnormal head shape).

<sup>14</sup> *A contribution to the anatomy of the speech center*. Stuttgart, 1882. p. 12 ff. Plate I.

island of Reil in the boy is, on average, somewhat larger, more convex and more grooved in all its diameters than in the girl." He has shown in adults (ibid. p. 32 ff. Plate IV.) that the female *gyrus frontalis tertius* is simpler and smaller than the male, especially that section immediately adjacent to the central gyrus. Inspection of the plates reveals that the differences are very considerable. Rüdinger has also shown<sup>15</sup> that "in female brains, the entire medial turn of the parietal lobe and the inner superior transitional turn lag significantly behind in their development." In mentally low standing men (e.g. a Negro) he found similar conditions of the parietal lobe to the female ones, while in mentally high standing men the powerful development of the parietal lobe gave a completely different picture. Rüdinger found the simplest conditions in a Bavarian woman, he speaks of "animal-like type."

According to this it is proven that *for the mental life, extraordinarily important parts of the brain – the windings of the frontal and temporal lobes – are less developed in women than in men and that this difference already exists at birth.*

Just as man and woman have the same cerebral convolutions, only of different sizes, so both have also the same mental qualities, a little more or less makes the difference, no quality comes exclusively to one sex. The senses seem to be about equally sharp in both sexes. Lombroso believes to have found that the pain sensitivity of the skin is lower in the female. Assuming that his observations were generally confirmed, it would not be a matter of lower sensory acuity, but of lower mental reaction to strong stimuli. Also the fact that men are

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<sup>15</sup> *A contribution to the anatomy of the lunate sulcus and the intraparietal sulcus in man.* Bonn, 1882. p. 6. The whole discussions about the skull and brain of the female are quite well compiled in the work of Ploss & Bartels (*Das Weib [The Woman]*, 1<sup>st</sup> batch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). I had forgotten that when I wrote the essay.

more capable of fine distinctions, e.g. when testing tea, sorting wool, is probably to be understood in such a way that they can better judge small differences in sensation<sup>16</sup>. On the other hand,

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<sup>16</sup> Recently a book has appeared whose title raises great hopes: *Comparative Psychology of the Sexes* by Helene Bradford Thompson (in German by J. E. Kotscher, Wurzburg, 1905). It is so-called experimental psychology, and the author has carried out her experiments on 25 high school and university students ("men") and 25 girl students ("women") in Chicago. She has made an honest effort, and it is not due to good will if one is as smart at the end as before. In such experiments, the research is the most difficult part, and very often, in spite of all exactness, the thing fails, because one does not know what one actually measured. Let's take a closer look. The 1<sup>st</sup> chapter is about "motor skills" (?), and all sorts of tests are carried out. It turns out that strength, speed, endurance and precision of movements are greater in men, but that women prevail in "coordination." With this unfortunate word it is said that the girls were more easily accomplished in terms of sorting different colored cardboard boxes into different boxes. What on earth can be deduced from this?! In the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter come sensitivity tests. Allegedly, women have "a finer sensibility," but when it comes to the sense of touch, the matter is not clear; in the evaluation of lifted weights and possibly also in terms of "surface sensibility," men perform better. There is no doubt that women are more likely to express pain when stung. If one considers that the setup of the experiments in part does not correspond to practical life at all, that the differences are on average quite small, that other observers have obtained different results, one will become overall suspicious. The same applies to the tests of the four special senses. The stimuli with an evenly perceptible effect are said to be a little smaller in women, "the ability to discriminate is generally better in men." As far as sensory perceptions and their evaluation come into question, one can put up with experimentation. But if the level of mental abilities in the narrower sense is to be determined, then one must be very careful. In all seriousness, it can only depend on what a person achieves in real life, not on laboratory games. The results of the experiments are therefore quite meager. The author thinks that memory and associative thinking are better in women. In reality, she has found that girls memorize meaningless syllable sequences somewhat more easily, and that their associative

the pleasure women take with colors is not to be understood as a better sense of color, but to be explained by mental relations. It is different with the motor skills, because in strength and dexterity the woman stands deeply below the man. Because of her weakness, she is mainly dependent on work that requires a certain dexterity, and this gives rise to the belief in the dexterous female fingers. However, as soon as a man takes on a woman's work, as a tailor, as a weaver, as a cook, etc., he does better work than the woman. Basically, dexterity is an achievement of the cerebral cortex, just like the evaluation of sensory perceptions, and we are again directed to look for the difference of the sexes in the actual mental abilities. One of the most essential differences is probably that the instinct plays a greater role in women than in men. One can form a live with this idea: at one end there are beings who act exclusively on

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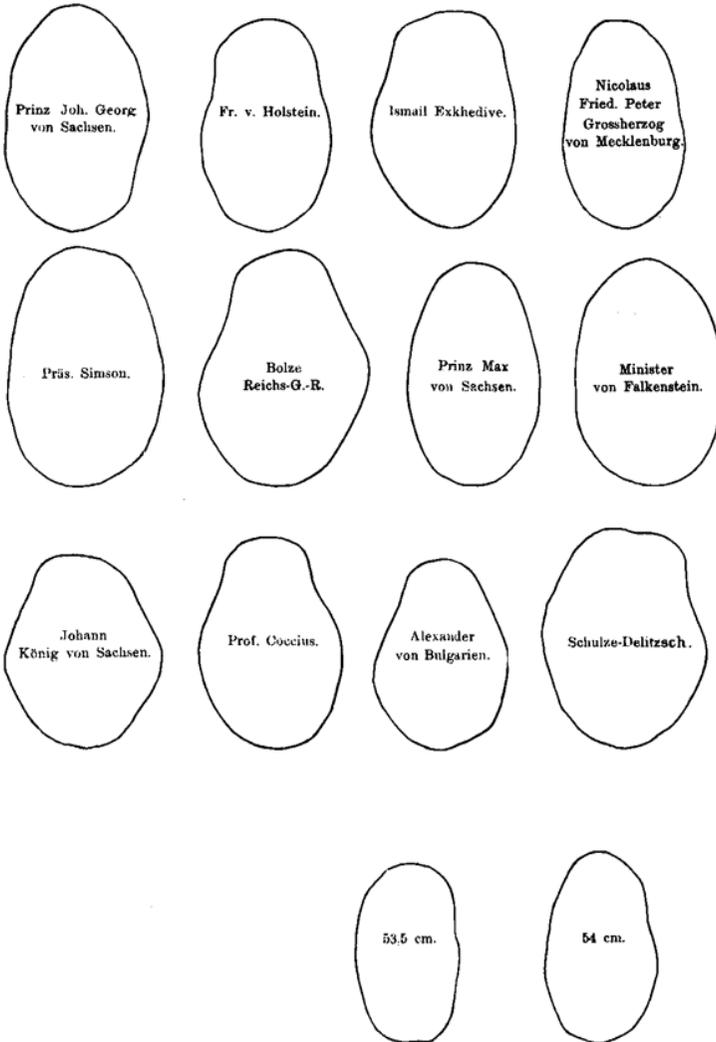
thinking while incorrect is somewhat more firm. If one considers that a thinking person would rebel against learning meaningless syllables, even with the best will in the world, and that the so-called external associations are often more abundant in the mentally ill than in the healthy, then one should not overestimate the value of this result. Further, it is said that the men's "power of judgment" is greater. Fine, but, if there were no other reasons for this assumption than the author's experiments, it would be bad, because it was a matter of solving geometrical and mechanical tasks, and it is quite inadmissible to assume general human abilities for these things. The "general knowledge" was tested by submitting school questions from the various subjects, and no essential difference between the sexes has been found. If the overestimation of such school examinations, which actually only allow to assess conditioning, is already questionable, then the greatest thing is that the author judges the mental life after the questions presented were answered. For example, she asked the young people: "Are you very conscientious?", or "Are you affectionate?", and took the answers seriously with touching naivety. With this method she found out that in relation to emotions there are at most very small differences between the sexes. There are small differences, for example: "women enjoy their studies more, while men devote more time to them." Alas!

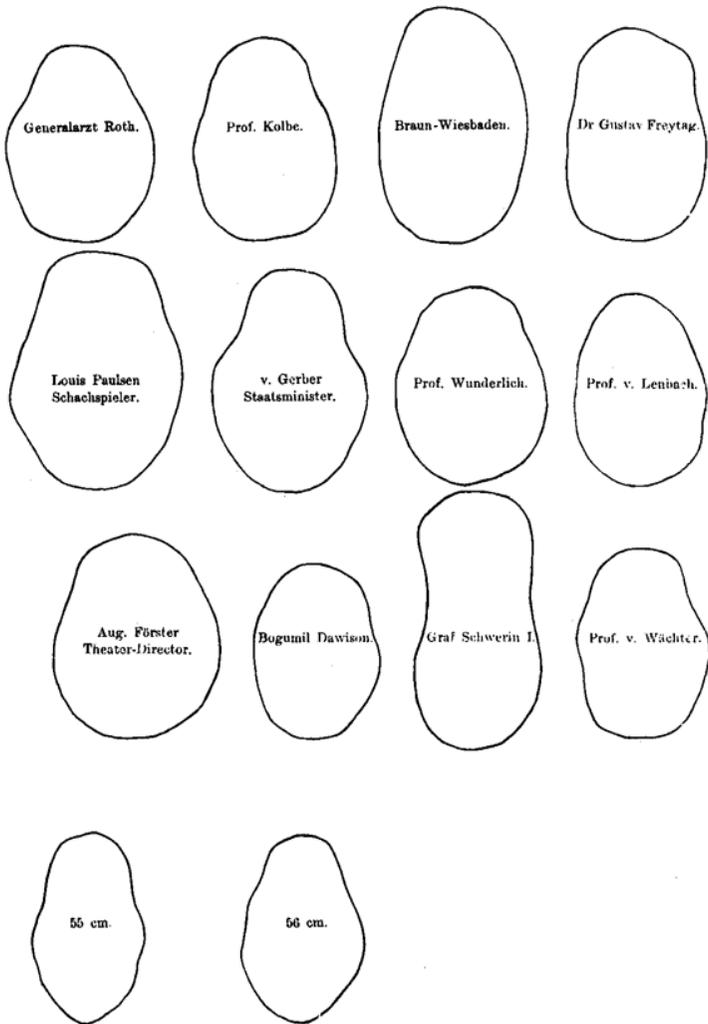
instinct, at the other those in whom every action is based on reflection. In general, it is peculiar to mental development that instinct has less and less to mean, reflection more and more, that the generic being becomes more and more individual. We speak of instinct when a purposeful action is carried out without the agent knowing why; as soon as certain circumstances recur, an apparatus works in us and we carry out an action as if an alien reason urges us to do so. But we also speak of instinctive cognition when we arrive at judgments without knowing how. Basically, no action and cognition is without instinct, for part of the process always falls into the unconscious, but there are differences in degree. The more the individual consciousness participates in cognition and action, the more highly developed the individual is, the more independent he is. We call feeling the intermediate state between the purely instinctive and the clearly conscious. To act out of feeling, to believe something to be true out of feeling, is to do it half instinctively. Instinct has great advantages: it is reliable and does not cause worries; feeling shares half of these advantages. *Instinct makes the woman animal-like, dependent, secure and cheerful.* In it rests her peculiar power, it makes her admirable and attractive. Many female peculiarities are connected with this animal-like quality. First of all, the lack of one's own judgment. What is true and good is true and good for women. They are strictly conservative and hate novelty, except, of course, in cases where the novelty brings personal advantage or the lover is in favor of it. Just as animals have been doing the same thing since time immemorial, so too would the human race, were there only women, have remained in its original state. All progress starts from the man. That is why the woman often clings to him like a lead weight; she prevents many a restlessness and inquisitive innovations, but she also hinders what is noble, for she is unable to distinguish good from evil and simply subjects everything to custom and "the sayings of the people." The lack of criticism is

also expressed in suggestibility. Instinct does not rule almost entirely on its own, as it does in animals, but is connected with individual thinking, which is not strong enough by itself and must rely on alien thinking, which bias, love, or vanity make appear trustworthy. Thus the apparent contradiction arises that women, as guardians of old customs, follow every fashion, are conservative, and yet accept every absurdity as soon as it is skillfully suggested. With the detachment from the originally instinctive, with the becoming of the ego and the growth of individual thinking, egoism grows first, or more correctly, the individual being, selfish by nature, which, as long as it obeys its instincts only, unconsciously also acts for the benefit of others, will, when it begins to think, act contrary to social instincts. Only a high spiritual development gives the insight that by promoting the general welfare, one's own welfare is also promoted. Most women remain in the middle state: their morality is definitely emotional morality or unconscious right-doing, conceptual morality is inaccessible to them, and reflection only makes them worse. To this one-sidedness is added the narrowness of their field of vision caused by their natural position. They live in the children and the man; what is beyond the family does not interest them. Justice without regard to the person is an empty concept to them. It is quite wrong to call women immoral, but they are morally one-sided or defective. As far as their love reaches, as far as viewed suffering awakens their compassion, they are often capable of any sacrifice and not seldom put the colder man to shame. But they are unjust at heart, they laugh inwardly at the law and violate it as soon as fear or training permit. In addition, there is the vehemence of the affections, the incapacity for self-control. Jealousy and wounded or dissatisfied vanity arouse storms that no moral concern can withstand. If the woman were not physically and mentally weak, if she were not usually rendered harmless by circumstances, she would be highly dangerous. In times of political insecurity one

has learned with horror of the injustice and cruelty of women, as well as in the women who have unhappily come to rule. In ordinary life, these two qualities usually show themselves only in the activity of the tongue and in writing: Insults, defamations, anonymous letters. The tongue is the sword of women, for their physical weakness prevents them from fencing with their fists, their mental weakness makes them forego evidence, so only the abundance of words remains. Quarrelsomeness and garrulity have always been rightly counted among the female traits. Chatting gives women infinite pleasure; it is the real female sport. Perhaps this can be understood if one thinks of the exercise games of animals. The cat chases after the ball, practicing to hunt mice, the woman exercises her tongue throughout her life, in order to be prepared for verbal fights.

**Supplement to Möbius, gender and head size**





*The lower, unnamed heads in each case are female.*

After these general characteristics, the so-called intellectual abilities would still have to be considered. One will have to separate the reception and retention of ideas, i.e. understanding and memory, on the one hand, and the arbitrary combination of ideas, the formation of new judgments, on the

other. Understanding and memory are not at all bad in many women, unless special talents come into question. If they want to, they grasp things quite well and remember what they have learned just as well as men. Since, in addition, they are docile and patient, they really have the potential to become master pupils. Wherever women have taken it into their heads to participate in higher education, there is only one voice saying that they are excellent students, and the more thoughtless the teacher is, the more satisfied he tends to be with the eager learning of the students, which is mostly rote learning. If, in spite of this, the great majority of the female sex learns extraordinarily little and forgets what they have learned extraordinarily quickly, this is not due to ability but to willingness. The average woman has exclusively personal interests; if learning does not offer a personal advantage in the near future, it is repugnant to her. Interest in the matter is present only in exceptional cases. The relatively favorable judgment about receptivity has its counterpart in the proof of the intellectual sterility of the woman. The highest is when a woman proves herself to be a good student in such a way that she handles the method learned from the teacher in the spirit of the teacher. In contrast, the actual "making", the invention, the creation of new methods is denied to the woman. She cannot become master, so to speak, because a master is someone who invents something. It is a popular trick of men, who have instilled their desire for emancipation in women, and of their followers, to claim that women have only lacked exercise, that they have been made slaves like the African Negroes by muscular men and that their minds have atrophied in slavery. To these assertions are usually attached Darwinian ravings that acquired brain atrophy has been inherited; and vice versa, it is to be expected that if now women exercise their brains, their granddaughters will be born with a large brain. Those ravings could at most have a meaning if it was a matter of

parthenogenesis. One cannot slap truth in the face more brazenly than "feminists" do. The easiest way is to point out the fields which have always been open to women and in which they have moved at will. Music, for example, has never been a male domain; on the contrary, more girls than boys are taught music. What has come out of it? The women sing and play, partly quite well, but that is the end of the matter. Where is the female composer who would mean progress? In painting, as in music, there is no contradiction between the creative and the performing artist; they all paint, and whether one of them creates is not always easy to say. However, it is easy to see that the vast majority of female painters are completely devoid of creative imagination and cannot go beyond a mediocre technique: flowers, still-life, portraits<sup>17</sup>. Very seldom one finds a real talent and then other traits tend to show intellectual hermaphroditism. The lack of the ability to combine, i.e. in art the lack of imagination, makes the female art practice by and large worthless. It is similar in other fields. I recall obstetrics, the development of which women have inhibited rather than promoted<sup>18</sup>. Also the narrators, who in some cases describe quite gracefully, and the extremely rare female poets move on well-trodden paths: usury practiced with the coins that men have minted. Even the culinary arts and the art of dressing have been promoted only by men, who invent the new recipes and the new fashions. Everything we see around us, every

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<sup>17</sup> The remarks of Kerschensteiner and Specht, which the author has noted especially for use in the 9<sup>th</sup> edition, also belong here. Namely K. (*The development of the talent for drawing*, Munich, 1905) finds that girls lag behind boys in terms of drawing talent, except in drawing flowers, ornaments... W. Stern has found that girls report on a picture they have seen much worse than boys.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. M. Runge's speech (*Male and female gynecology*, Gottingen, 1899), which I received only after writing this article. Cf. also: H. Schelenz, *Women in the realm of Aesculapius*, Leipzig, 1900. The same in the German *Aerzte-Zeitung* of June 15, 1904.

household appliance, the instruments of daily use, everything has been invented by men.

It is therefore understandable that the sciences in the narrower sense have not been enriched by women, nor can they expect to be. The few female scholars, whose names the history of the last 2 millennia contains, were good students, nothing more. Of course, this is also true of most male scholars, but those are the peaks, these form the lower layer from which only the true greats of science emerge. In ordinary life, too, the inability of the female mind to combine, the lack of independent thought, comes as a surprise every day and often forms a sharp contrast to the ease of acquisition. In addition, there is the lack of objectivity, which turns desires into reasons and dislikes into proofs. On the other hand, the realism peculiar to woman, which considers only advantage and disadvantage, ruthlessly pursues its goal, is not inhibited by factual considerations, brings practical advantages and enables woman to occasionally defeat the more cumbersome man, who looks at things from different sides and more impersonally. Only this female cunning is not a sign of high intellectual gifts; the woman stands here opposite the man like a skillful merchant to an artist or scholar. Incidentally, female cunning, if it happens to meet male cunning and is not inhibited by the sexual instinct, soon sets sail. That cunning is supported by dissimulation. The female is forced to this by her sexual role, it is instinctively practiced and its perfection makes up an essential part of female education. The task is to appear desirable, therefore one's own desire must be concealed and everything must be cleverly covered up that could be detrimental to the estimation of others. *Between us be truth*, it is said in the play<sup>19</sup>, between us there is untruth, it is said in life. This must be so, and nothing is

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<sup>19</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Act III, Sc. 1, 1787.  
T/N

more foolish than to try to forbid a woman from lying. Dissimulation, i.e. lying, is the natural and indispensable weapon of the woman, which she cannot do without. Admittedly, that weapon should only serve for defense, but it is understandable that it does not remain so, that a process which forms an important part of the way of life should not be used without necessity. In itself, the female lie is justified only in sexual relations, but equity demands that it be judged more leniently than the male lie.

Like dissimulation and other characteristics considered so far, woman's whole nature is most easily understood teleologically. How must this being be constituted in order to best fulfill the task set for it? The human woman should not only bear children, but also take care of them, since they, in contrast to the young of the animals, remain in need of help for so many years. *This need for help on the part of children makes a greater differentiation of the sexes in humans than in animals.* The man alone has to look after the provision of food, defense, and the realm of the outside world in general, for the woman must first and foremost be a mother. In mental matters, too, everything that makes mothering easier is to be given to the woman, and everything that makes it more difficult is to be eliminated. *Motherly love and loyalty are what Nature wants from woman.* That is why even the little girl plays with dolls and tenderly takes care of all those in need of help. That is why the woman is childlike, cheerful, patient and simple-minded. The mother needs courage at most to defend her children; in other relationships it would only cause trouble and is therefore missing. It is the same with other masculine qualities; strength and the urge to go far, imagination and the desire for knowledge would only make the woman restless and hinder her in her maternal profession, so Nature gave them only in small doses. Just as an intelligent man will not choose a learned female to take care of his small children, so the eternal wisdom

did not place next to the man another man with a uterus, but the woman, to whom she gave everything necessary for her noble profession, but to whom she denied the male mental power.

According to all this, the female idiocy is not only present, but also necessary, it is not only a physiological fact, but also a physiological postulate. If we want a woman who completely fulfills her maternal profession, she cannot have a male brain. If it could be made that the female faculties would be developed equally to the male ones, the mother organs would atrophy and we would have an ugly and useless hermaphrodite before us. Someone has said that nothing should be required of the female except that she be "healthy and stupid." That is roughly expressed, but there is truth in the paradox. Excessive brain activity makes the woman not only wrong, but also sick. Unfortunately, we see this every day before our eyes. If woman is to be what Nature intended her to be, she must not compete with man. Modern foolish women are bad breeders and bad mothers. In the degree to which "civilization" grows, fertility decreases. The better schools become, the worse maternity beds become, the lower the milk secretion becomes, in short, the more unfit the women become. Lombroso, who likes to refer to the animal kingdom, emphasizes that in the whole animal kingdom intelligence is in inverse proportion to fertility, that the female ants and bees acquire higher intelligence only at the expense of sexuality, while the queen bee, who alone is capable of reproduction, is a completely dull creature. Nevertheless, he continues: "Certainly a more extended participation in social life will gradually raise the intelligence of woman, and indeed in some more highly developed races the pleasing consequences of this are already apparent." Either the "pleasing" is a bitter irony or a ghastly inconsistency. By rights, only the devil or a fool who believes in a community of souls

and similar silliness should rejoice over something that corrupts the race and means the beginning of the end.

Doctors have often been agitated by the demand of women to be admitted into medicine. Perhaps this matter is not so important. On the one hand, it cannot be denied that female mental abilities are sufficient for learning medicine, and that occasionally female physicians, if properly guided and supervised, can be useful (e.g. in Mohamedan populations), but on the other hand, only a few girls will turn to the study, fewer and fewer as the matter loses its "actuality," and these few will be those who are not quite fit for their female profession anyway. So, even if medicine, like women themselves, will not benefit much from the female study, it does not matter very much.

It seems to me much more important *that physicians get a clear idea of the female brain or mental state, that they understand the significance and value of female idiocy*, and that they do everything in their power to fight the unnatural efforts of the "feminists" in the interest of the human race. What is at stake here is the health of the people, which is endangered by the perversity of "modern women." Nature is a strict woman and threatens the violation of her regulations with severe punishments. She has willed that woman should be a mother, and has directed all her powers to this end. If the woman fails to serve the species, if she wants to "live out" as an individual, then she is afflicted with an infirmity. Unfortunately, the man and the offspring are punished at the same time. It is our duty, the physician's, to advise and warn here. The future will hold us accountable. Should we get upset about the mistreatment of the female liver due to over-tightness of lacing, yet calmly watch the mistreatment of the female brain?

Admittedly, even if everything that can be done against it is done, the evil will remain, and probably increase, for it seems to

be a function of civilization. Just as the urban population with its predominantly cerebral activity gradually becomes barren and would die off without an influx from the countryside, so civilization in general seems to drain the sources of life and a people finally becomes so civilized that it can no longer live and can only be replenished by barbarian blood. Obviously, the primal phenomenon is the contrast between brain activity and reproduction. Both functions are closely connected, but the more one gets the predominance, the more the other suffers. Intellectual people are nervous and their offspring even more so. An essential characteristic of this form of degeneration is the blurring of the gender characters: feminine men and masculine women. The more nervous the population becomes, the more often girls with talents and generally masculine mental characteristics become. Also one must probably refer to crossed heredity: the daughter strikes after the father and the more intellectual men are bred, the more frequently they transfer their characteristic to their daughters. The matter is not improved by explanations, because explainable or not, necessary or not, the masculinization of the female always remains a misfortune.

The law should also take into consideration the physiological idiocy of the female. Our laws are, on the whole, made only for men; minors are taken care of, but the adult woman is considered equal to the adult man in criminal law (to speak only of this), and not even for a mitigating circumstance is female sex considered anywhere. Wrongly so. To the considerations made so far is added that the female is to be regarded as abnormal during a considerable part of her life. I do not need to speak to physicians about the importance of menstruation and pregnancy for spiritual life, to point out that both conditions, without actual disease, disturb the spiritual equilibrium, impair the freedom of the will from the perspective

of the law<sup>20</sup>. If one considers the mental disabilities of the female discussed earlier, especially the inability to resist storms of emotions and the lack of sense of justice, one must realize that it is a great injustice to measure both sexes with the same yardstick. Only the low criminality of women, which is easily explained by the circumstances of female life, does not make them feel the harshness of our laws. But the more a woman leaves the protection of the home, the more she will come into conflict with the law, and then she will often be punished more severely than she deserves. To give only a few examples, is it fair to punish simple insults and especially insults to officials equally for both sexes? Does not the same apply to many petty thefts, which are basically to be treated as nuisances? One thing in particular should be noted. In their statements about the past, many women are not at all able to separate what they have really experienced from what they believe they have experienced. Such memory delusions also occur in men, but are much more frequent in women and cause false statements in which any *dolus* [deceit, malicious intent] is missing. Partly for this reason, little or nothing was given to the testimony of women in ancient times. The ancients exaggerated in one direction, we exaggerate in another, *overestimate the woman as a witness, treat her too harshly as a defendant*.

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<sup>20</sup> Krafft-Ebing has repeatedly made incisive discussions.

## II

If we see ourselves compelled to declare the normal woman as feeble-minded in comparison with the man, then nothing is said about the disadvantage of the woman. Her merits lie elsewhere than the merits of the man, and the differentiation of the sexes appears to us as a purposeful arrangement of Nature, in which man and woman do not fare badly. However, if one takes a closer look at the life of the woman, one would like to think that Nature has dealt harshly with her. The woman is not only more meagerly endowed with intellectual gifts than the man, but she also loses them much more quickly. This is the second sense in which one can speak of the physiological idiocy of woman; here the prematurely aged woman is compared with the fresh or normal woman. It seems to me that up to now the frequency and prematurity of the mental decline in woman has not been sufficiently considered<sup>21</sup>. Here, too, it might be best to understand the matter teleologically. The woman is supposed to be a mother; but in order to become one, she must first have a man who takes upon himself to care for her and the children. Therefore, institutions had to be created to make the man inclined to it. Schopenhauer says: "With girls, Nature has had in view what is called in a dramatic sense a *"striking effect,"* for she endows them for a few years with a richness of beauty and a fullness of charm at the expense of the rest of their lives; so that they may during these years ensnare the fantasy of a man to such a degree as to make him rush into taking the honorable care of them, in some kind of form, for a lifetime—a step which would not seem sufficiently justified if he only considered the matter." To this it must be added that the endowment of girls

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<sup>21</sup> According to Matiegka, from 20 to 60 years of age the male brain outweighs the female brain by 145 g, but from 60 to 90 years of age it outweighs the female brain by 173 g.

does not consist only in physical qualities, and that the loss which women suffer relatively early does not refer only to these. Much more than is usually thought, exterior and interior correspond to each other. Thus, the blossoming and fading of female beauty also correspond to mental changes that take place in the same sense. The spirit of the virgin is excited, fiery, sharp. Thus, on the one hand, her power to attract is increased, on the other hand, she is enabled to be active in sexual selection, to be equal to the opponent in love games and love battles. The whole meaning of female life depends on the girl getting the right man; at this moment, as the climax of life, all forces are directed and all mental faculties are concentrated on the one goal. As is well known, the intellect is the servant of the will, i.e. our insight serves our instincts, we are perceptive only when we follow our inclinations; interest makes us wise. One has this talent, the other that; in the subject he loves he is capable, in others not. The female talent now far gone is simply the disposition for affairs of love; here the will drives the intellect, sharpens and tightens it. All other matters really gain meaning only because they are related to the main business. When the virgin meets the young man, she is in the position of a commander who goes to meet a hostile army. But also out of action (to remain in the military field), the virgin is to be compared to a mobilized troop. She wears the war kit, she is always on post and ready for action. In other words, the mental excitement manifests itself in everything she does. The girl gets excited about things that don't concern her at all, is interested, sometimes only in appearance, but sometimes seriously, in all kinds of things, makes judgments, argues, in short, she appears to be witty and, in love matters, often ingenious. Now she marries and after a short time she becomes someone else. The fiery, often brilliant girl becomes a simple, harmless woman. Of course, things do not always turn out this way, but quite often people noticed that transformation for the worse early on and

explained it in their own way. It was believed that with virginity a spell is broken, that secret powers disappear. In the Song of the Nibelungs, the virgin Brunhilde overcomes every man; when she is overcome by Siegfried, she becomes a woman like others. Similar things are often found in the sagas. In modern life, one rather says: she no longer needs it, in the opinion that the physical and mental liveliness had only the purpose of attracting the man. In any case, it is not only a matter of wanting, of which the woman could give an account. She actually loses abilities she previously possessed and, even with the best will in the world, can no longer perform what she used to. Only about this can one be doubtful whether the deficit in intellectual achievements can be explained exclusively by the loss of the excitement which stimulates the intellect.

Even in those who have done well in the first years of marriage, the decline often begins after a few puerperia [births]. Just as beauty and physical strength dwindle, so, too, the mental faculties revert back and the woman is "simplified," as it is popularly known. Often this matter is not noticed, or at least does not bother, because the so-called mental capacities remain unchanged, and in ordinary life no intellectual demands are made on the woman. The attentive observer, however, cannot be deceived, and the factuality of this misconception is often widely recognized. The "ladies of the emancipation" have often referred to it grimly and, of course, attributed it to the fact that the degrading confinement to the nursery and the kitchen would lead to mental decline. Here, as elsewhere, the explanation from the "milieu" is based on superficiality. This restriction would not occur at all if special spiritual needs were present. In the relatively large number of women whose brains are more permanently applied, it really does not occur, or, if the circumstances in fact permit only what is necessary, the freshness of mind is preserved in spite of the children and the cooking. Undoubtedly, not all of them fall prey to invective, a

behavior that obviously has its conditions in innate characteristics, even if it is not always possible to achieve a closer understanding. If we completely disregard the many poorly endowed ones, whose mental life is minimal and with whom nothing can be noticed of a mental blossoming even in the prime of life, then women may be compared to a troop that has to endure repeated attacks from the enemy, i.e. time. Some fall already in the first battle, or become weak after a few years of marriage, others hold out longer, but gradually succumb, whether they become exceedingly plain women, or wither away into whimsical old maids. But the remaining ones still have to endure the main onslaught of the enemy, the climacterium [~menopause]. The higher a being stands, the later it will mature. Already by the fact that Nature made man mature later than woman, she has preferred him and has shown that she wanted to go higher with him. But the favoring of the man becomes much greater still due to the fact that he is allowed to keep the once acquired abilities almost up to the end of life. The precocious woman, on the other hand, has on average only 30 years in which she is complete. At first, the climacterium means only the cessation of sexual activity, yet the organism is one and the various functions are interdependent. In particular, there are close relations between sexual activity and brain activity. If the latter awakens, the former changes, and if the former disappears, the latter will also change. That first change is a considerable plus, therefore the second will be a minus. Accordingly, we have to expect from the climacterium, through which the woman becomes an "old woman," a weakening of the mental abilities. Experience does not deceive the expectation. I would like to point out right away that there are exceptions, that some old women delight with their astonishing freshness even into old age. But they are only the old guard, which does not surrender and also repels the main onslaught of the enemy, at least for the most part; the bulk of the army is

defeated. First of all, it must be remembered that the outside is the mirror of the inside. It is true that physiognomy is often ridiculed, and in fact we are usually not able to justify our physiognomic judgments discursively, it is a matter of instinctive recognition, but nevertheless one can rely on what the face says. Look impartially at the majority of old women and think about the involuntarily formed judgment. It is known what abundance of mockery and begrudging remarks has been poured over the poor old women in verses, proverbs and other speech since time immemorial. Could this have happened without reason? One could think that it is an expression of hostility, but where should it come from? The man does not hate the female sex, unless he is forced to fight with it. But against the no longer sexually active women he must, apart from special cases, feel indifference or even benevolence mixed with pity. They no longer mean anything to him, and the memory of his own mother should remind everyone to be lenient. If, in spite of this, the popular voice has almost nothing but unpleasantness to say of them, and the saying leaves little good hair on their heads, their own characteristics must be to blame. They are accused of superstition, narrow-mindedness, pettiness in general, quarrelsomeness, talkativeness, gossip addiction, all of which point to a low level of intellectual abilities and constitute the woman's acquired idiocy. To be fair, one must add that the general verdict would have been milder if the old women were less ugly. Ugly means hateful, and people actually hate ugliness, as can be seen from the animals considered ugly. Thus the unfavorable opinion overshoots the mark when it speaks of wicked old women, wicked old witches, and so on. The wicked old women were no good in former times either, one only did not ascribe their wickedness to them as long as they had physical charms. However, through the idiocy the malice pierces more undisguised and takes ridiculous forms, but it does not produce it. The simple idiocy of the years

fortunately leaves the truly good qualities of the woman unchanged, the maternal disposition remains and in spite of all simple-mindedness an old woman can harbor a treasure trove of tenderness.

After this general overview, it would be necessary to show in more detail how the acquired physiological idiocy of the woman manifests itself. It has already been noticed by others that women's learning ability, their most developed ability, ceases relatively early. Of course, it is very difficult to find out more about it. A very striking feature is the gradual increase of mental myopia. Only the nearest thing is seen and therefore it is overestimated. Characteristic is thriftiness in the wrong place; large expenditures must be made, because one could not decide on small ones and, in order to save pennies, the mark is lost. Related to this is the overestimation of small matters in general; present trifles make us forget the past and the future, rob us of all composure; big and small things are treated with the same excitement and the truly important is neglected for the sake of a trifle. Bad experiences do not change anything in the matter, and arguments achieve theoretical agreement, but do not improve. "I am like that first of all." The weakness of the power of judgment becomes especially apparent because instinct diminishes with the years. It is often concealed by leaning on other people's judgment; but if the support is missing, one is shocked by unbelievable mistakes in very simple matters. The suggestibility decreases more and more, monotonous self-suggestions prevail and cause a stubbornness against which reasons are completely powerless. Because the mind becomes stiff, the existing is more and more right, "misonism" [fear or hatred of change] develops and the reactions become machine-like. These things are generally peculiar to old age, but in women they are observed remarkably early, and they receive a peculiar coloring through the connection with the female art of speech. Whoever has not had

the good fortune to listen to the discussions of older ladies can hardly form an idea of the length and emptiness of those conversations. The plainest topic is processed into countless variations, and the sharp tempos prevail. The image of the flow of speech has undergone many variations: eaves, rippling waves, etc., perhaps the best comparison is with an empty mill.

The knowledge of the different forms of the physiological sense of idiocy can also be of clinical importance when it comes to distinguishing it from pathological idiocy, and the one who only knows the norm as taken from the man is in danger of diagnosing pathological conditions in a woman where they are not present. The assessment of mild idiocy is one of the most difficult tasks and our clinical methods are directed only to gross changes. It is obvious that the school examinations, which are based on the existing knowledge, are not sufficient. Nor do the methods that form a judgment about the speed of simple mental processes provide sufficient information. The most important thing would be to examine the capacity of combination. Rieger<sup>22</sup> has made some suggestions to this effect. They probably used simple puzzle-type tasks and the like. In any case, it would be desirable if the efforts in this direction would find general support. But even after improving the methods, one cannot rely on clinical testing alone. This will never be exhaustive, mental states can interfere, in short, the observation of the human being under the conditions of real life will be indispensable. Especially the judgment about the mental capacity will not be based on random tests alone, but on the life history.

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<sup>22</sup> *Description of cognitive disorders due to brain injury together with a draft of a generally applicable method of intelligence testing.* Hearing of the Physico-Medical Society of Wurzburg, 1888-89, p. 65-95.



## **B. Part two**

### **Explanations**

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Of course, my essay has been judged very differently. Many have agreed with me verbally or in writing; however, as far as I can see, no one has yet found the courage to do so publicly. To my delight, I have also received female applause; one lady, for example, told me that she felt relieved of a pressure, since all her life she had not been able to reconcile the assertion that woman could do the same as man and her consciousness. Much more frequent than the applause was the censure, the displeasure showed the most different degrees, from benevolent euphoria to passionate indignation. Some of my critics have said that my treatise is a polemic against the female sex, and that I am a misogynist. This is, of course, quite foolish. For in truth I am leading the cause of the female sex against its detractors and am fighting against anemic intellectualism, against misconceived liberalism, which amounts to a dreary egalitarianism. The real enemies of women are the "feminists" who want to abolish the differences between the sexes. Even by fighting them, I am not fighting against women, because if they follow the temptations and rave for the "new woman," they lack the prudence, the original power, to know what they are doing; they would also achieve nothing, were it not for the men behind them who are instilling their thoughts into them.

I do not emphasize the proof that the female brain is less efficient than the male brain, for this has been proved often enough, and the matter is obvious enough for the prejudiced, but rather that the inferiority of the female brain is useful and necessary. Some have emphasized the intellectual and moral

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<sup>23</sup> Early foreword to the second edition.

weaknesses of the female sex more than I have, but they think that these depend on custom and can be changed by education. Fanny Lewald, for example, belongs here<sup>24</sup>. It seems to belong to the nature of the reformers that they overestimate the importance of arbitrariness. The political and religious innovators do not see that mankind belongs to Nature and that the human institutions that recur everywhere necessarily arise from the nature of man. They believe that if only one had the right insight and good will, the world would change. They do not see the real man, who in the main follows his instincts, but they have a wax doll before their eyes, whose form can be changed at will, and hope to triumph over Nature with laws. Such fantasists were the revolutionaries of 1789, so are also our current proponents of *Sturm und Drang*<sup>25</sup>. As Leo Tolstoy believes that people could become Christians in his sense, if they only wanted to, so the feminists think to transform the woman through law and education. It is downright childish to think that the nature of woman, as it has existed at all times and in all peoples, is the result of arbitrariness. The custom is secondary, it has not put woman in her place. Nature has subordinated her to man, and therefore the custom came to be. Since all efforts to eliminate the essential differences of the sexes, to which the smaller head of the woman belongs, must be unsuccessful, one could laugh about it, if it did not bring so much misery with it. The modern endeavors in the narrower

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<sup>24</sup> F. Lewald, *Felt and Thought [Gefühltes und Gedachtes]* 1900. The judgments of this very clever woman about her sisters are very harsh.

<sup>25</sup> Proto-Romantic movement in German literature and music that occurred between the late 1760s and early 1780s. Within the movement, individual subjectivity and, in particular, extremes of emotion were given free expression in reaction to the perceived constraints of rationalism imposed by the Enlightenment and associated aesthetic movements. The period is named for Friedrich Maximilian Klingler's eponymous play, which was first performed by Abel Seyler's famed theatrical company in 1777. T/N

sense of the word are only a part of the perversities that accompany the so-called civilization, perversities that we cannot eliminate from the world, but which everyone should do his best to recognize and fight. Social ills are similar to diseases; they grow with culture, and we fight against them as best we can. Woman is called to be a mother, and everything that prevents her from doing so is evil. The worst obstacle is the necessity of life, which postpones or prevents the marriage, which forces the woman to acquire food for herself. The desire to help girls and women who are oppressed by the hardships of life, to provide them with the skills and means to lead a decent life, is of course justified, and no reasonable person will oppose "emancipation" of this kind. But one should recognize that helping is a stopgap and an evil in itself. Medicine is for the sick, not for the healthy. The arbitrary damage to the female profession is quite different from hardship. There are two main ways of steering away from the mother's activity: one may speak of the French method on the one hand, and the Anglo-American method on the other. By the former I mean the ladies' economy by the latter the forcing of intellectual work. I call the ladies' economy French because during the last centuries under the *ancien régime* in France it received the highest level of education and because it has shown its corruptibility most clearly. The rightful lady is there for pleasure: for the pleasure of others and for her own. Everything that is heavy, impure, troublesome does not exist for her, she hovers like a Greek goddess in sunny beauty above the earthly haze. She wants to love, rule and speak; men are destined to love her, serve her and chat with her. Her throne is in the "salon" (we don't have a German expression for that, you could perhaps say: chat room). As is well known, the word salon characterizes society before the great revolution, and it can be boldly asserted that the latter would not have been possible without the salon. For the pre-revolutionary society perished not because of its badness, but

because of its weakness. But the cause of the weakness was primarily the salon, in which, in the feminine sense, pleasure was the only goal in life, which made everything soft and effeminate. Everything became a game and everything serious was degraded. Love was a game, possibly without consequences; if it did have consequences, at least they should not disturb the pleasure more than was absolutely necessary. Art and science were a game, their real purpose was to provide material for entertainment, and their perfection was reached when they were bite-sized for the ladies. This shameful hustle and bustle is of course not confined to any country or time; it was perhaps the purest before the revolution, but to a certain extent it reigns in us and everywhere where there is wealth and there are no serious goals. A lazy society rots, and one of the most important signs of putrefaction is that the lady takes the place of the mother.

More honorable, but likewise pernicious, is the English-American method, so called because in the English-speaking peoples the striving for a man's brain in a woman's head gained the earliest spread. If good intention could make a bad thing good, it would be the case here, for the representatives of the English method usually work unselfishly and with the uplifting awareness of the good deed toward their goal. Yes, there is something touching in seeing young girls forego all sorts of comforts and wreck their health for the sake of educational mania. Because the feminists sincerely consider their harmful activity to be very meritorious, they attack every opponent with great bitterness and see in the likes of me despicable devils, whose ignorance is even their smallest fault. They consider themselves especially justified because they are in the habit of conflating the procurement of income for needy girls, i.e. justified emancipation, with the masculinization of women, i.e. unjustified emancipation, a practice which has some advantages when arguing. If one assumes that the feminists have achieved

their goal, and that the women have taken possession of all male occupations and rights, then in the most favorable case the result would be useless. For women would at the most accomplish again what men had already accomplished before. But the number of workers would be doubled and the value of the work diminished. This would be bad enough, but a minor evil against the further consequences. For there would first be an enormous decrease in the number of births, because marriages would become much rarer, and few children would be produced in marriage. Now most girls push for marriage, because they follow their instinct, and because they want to be provided for. If they are incited into thinking, and can make a living without a husband, their naive selfishness becomes refined selfishness, and it is precisely the brightest who become marriage-shy. Also, the man-like woman can entice the man much less than the natural one. It goes without saying that marriages would become childless, for the new woman cannot bear many children and does not want to. There will be no-child marriages, one-child marriages, two-child marriages at most. If, by the will of the man or otherwise, a larger number of children comes into being, either the children or the woman must suffer hardship, for the woman must sacrifice the welfare of the children to her profession, or the latter to the former. Moreover, the quality of the children will leave much to be desired, because the offspring of the 'brain ladies' are not characterized by strength, and there is a lack of mother's milk. In short, the population decreases rapidly in number and nature, the people itself enters old age. Since in no case the whole of mankind will participate in the transformation of the female, a feminist people must succumb to its neighbors, and its remnants will be absorbed into other healthy peoples. If only certain classes carry out the man-woman education in a nation, then they put themselves on the extinction list. It is always a matter of social suicide, if you will, of betrayal of country or

class. Fortunately, one need not fear that these gloomy prophecies will be fulfilled, since the unconscious reason manifesting itself in the instinct, as long as a people has any vitality at all, makes the execution of the feminist plans impossible. After all, enough mischief is caused by them, because the groups which are harmed by them are just the most advanced in culture. If the "intellectuals" want to preserve their generations and live on in their descendants, they must, above all, take strict care that their women are healthy women and not 'brain ladies', because the cultured man alienated from Nature needs the natural woman as a counterpart; otherwise education kills its disciples without mercy, i.e. their families die out.

But what should you do? First of all, refrain from doing anything that is detrimental to a woman as a mother. Before anything, there is the upbringing of the girls. It was believed that they were doing something good by setting up secondary schools for girls in which girls should be taught a general education. Lately they even want to have grammar schools for girls, which Pastor Hansjakob says are as useless as a goiter. The best thing would be to tear down all of the "high schools." In any case, their success is small<sup>26</sup>, but the bad thing is that the

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<sup>26</sup> In the Grenzbote (LIX. 31, p. 235, 1900) there is an essay: "What do our secondary schools for girls achieve?" The author often asked girls of about 16 years of age about their knowledge. "The result was, around zero ... But if what you had learned is completely lost, isn't this result, with eight or ten years spent on school benches, with bad eyes, bad nerves, and a pale body, paid too dearly? Isn't it better, as in the old days, to tailor women's education to the most meager measure from the outset and to devote the free time to learning useful things and caring for health?" The author miraculously believes that girls' ignorance is a result of this inadequacy of the schools, and he thinks that only these should be better organized. No, rapid unlearning is Nature's help against school tyranny. As a rule, the female brain quickly rejects what is imposed on it.

girls in them become nervous and weak. They learn what they don't need and get a headache in the process, but they don't learn what they need. It is an abomination to hear historical dates, geographical references, chemical formulas, etc. being drummed in, how mendaciousness and phrase-making are encouraged by essays on absurd topics. Public institutions must be calculated on the average. There have always been unusually capable girls, but there are few of them. You shouldn't put anything in their way, on the contrary, you should make their way easier and leave all doors open for them. Free path for every talented girl, but not useless mass education. If the majority of boys are rather poorly qualified for "humane" education, Nature shows girls all the more what is practically useful. If one limits oneself to teaching the girls after elementary school in what is useful to them in life, handicrafts, household chores, child care, with knowledge of the public institutions of the state, the community, the church, the technical things mainly used in life, the financial affairs, and whatever else may come into consideration, they will learn easily and keep what they have learned. Languages must be learned the way the child learns to speak, not "scientifically." Supervision of reading can replace literature lessons. Some time ago a lady made the good suggestion of introducing a year of service for the girls, that is, to command them to perform some useful service for a while. If I remember correctly, the main focus was on nursing. However, one should not emphasize this too much, it demands special qualities, and it would not be good if the hospital scent permeated life. The main thing remains child care. Actually, every girl should have the honor to have her child by the age of 20 or at the latest by the age of 25. Now some young mothers have too many, and the great number of the illegitimate have no children. The childless are supposed to help the rich and to stand by the poor mothers, who often struggle with their strength. How to do that, of

course, I can't argue here; I've been told long ago that *the shoemaker should stick to his last* [stick to his field, mind his own business]. I will therefore break off and just repeat: Protect women against intellectualism.

Again I note that many and varied reviews have been devoted to my essay. Some critics have openly agreed with me this time. I am happy to mention this, but, in the nature of things, the criticisms, which are wholly or largely positive, do not give rise to any further comments. The "others", however, and they are the majority, compel me to say a few more things. Female pens have only disapproval for me, and that is understandable, for the girls and women who feel that I am right do not usually belong to the 'penned'. I could now be brief and say: The lack of understanding, the many errors and the maliciousness of the female criticism only prove that I have correctly judged the female mindset. However, that would be unjust. First of all, not all are hateful, some rather show a thoroughly honest disposition. Secondly, however, I believe I owe it to everyone to clear up misunderstandings as best I can and to facilitate understanding as much as possible through explanations. Originally the treatise was intended for medical circles. Since it has now reached the general public, some things have to be explained that previously did not need explaining.

My opponents are often at odds, but almost all of them agree on one thing, namely that they think I'm a very stupid fellow. At least I cannot understand otherwise that I am being instructed from all sides about things which, in my opinion, are self-evident. First of all, my whole representation is criticized. Some rookies, who count themselves among the scholars, think that I am actually not writing scientifically, because it is not scientific to write about things that leave room for opinions that cannot be dealt with exactly. I reply to them that I have had many years of scientific activity behind me and that if, for the sake of the general good, I now like to go into "non-strictly

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<sup>27</sup> Early foreword to the 8<sup>th</sup> edition.

scientific" areas, I know what I am doing. My representation is, it is said from the other side, loveless and one-sided; instead of weighing up the advantages and disadvantages evenly, I only assert all the disadvantages in a bitter and unfriendly manner. Well, I think that tenderness does not belong in a factual presentation, in general it is neither a question of praise nor blame, not of ideals and wishes, but of contemplating the real; my theme was the mental weakness of women, so it had to be said clearly and sharply how this weakness shows itself. If I had written "about woman" it would have sounded different. The title caused quite a stir. Idiocy is something pathological, how can he dare speak of physiological idiocy? Well, I am bowing to the point and firmly hold on to the fact that the concept of physiological idiocy is indispensable if one wants to compare the intellectual abilities of the ages, the sexes, the peoples.<sup>28</sup> "Mental weakness" says about the same as idiocy, but does not contain the characteristic of the original, the regular, but can be related to states of weakness that have arisen by chance and yet needs an addition if the pathological weakness is to be expressly excluded. To speak of "intellectual inferiority" is tasteless<sup>29</sup>, because inferiority is a very ugly foreign word and also has a contemptuous connotation. If the woman is called an idiot in comparison to the man, then she should not feel belittled, no value judgment is expressed, only a fact.

Yes, but "the woman" [Weib, in the sense of 'female'; referring to the title]. I am told that I am wrongly referring to the use of language. In the past, of course, woman [Weib] was the gender designation, but language is advancing and with the current refinement she is called "woman" [Frau, in the sense of 'lady']. At the same time, however, I am reminded of the old

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<sup>28</sup> I cannot go into everything. If someone confuses stupidity and lack of knowledge, he cannot demand that I quarrel with him.

<sup>29</sup> Occasionally I have done it myself; we are all sinners.

"women's shelter" [Frauenhaus], which, it seems to me, is not entirely happy. If you are interested in the historical, you can read up on Grimm's dictionaries to see how I did it. It is correct that the term "woman" [Frau], originally intended as an honorific address, was used for adult persons of the female sex in general, especially in application to social conditions. This use is understandable and justified, because woman [Weib] denotes especially the sexual being. Otherwise, the talk of "further training in language" is pure flutter. Even today, the word "woman" [Frau] is still used in the old sense, because the maid says: gentleman is quite good, but woman [Frau] is no longer tolerable, and woman [Frau] corresponds to the gentleman in the address as well. Even today, the name woman [Frau] is still used as a collective term in social institutions; on the train one speaks of women's compartments, as one used to speak of the women's room. Even today the gender designation is woman [Weib, female], and so it will remain in defiance of all feminists. If these say woman [Frau] instead of woman [Weib] where the feminine characteristics are discussed as sexual characteristics, and woman is contrasted with man as a natural phenomenon, then it is not a question of developing language, but of arrogance; it is the same when every maid wants to be called a miss [Fräulein]. Soon they will also replace the word "female" with "womanly", although it now has a completely different meaning, and will call a female tiger the tiger's mistress. The following is also odd. Although the neuter gender [in German, nouns have a gender and can be masculine, feminine, or neutral] of the term "woman" [Weib] is most likely to offend female pride<sup>30</sup>, the singular has not fallen into disrepute. One

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<sup>30</sup> I asked scholars why 'woman' [Weib] was feminine, but they couldn't give me any information. J. A. Schmeller (Bavarian dictionary) says: "Woman, wib, vif; in the Gothic remnants that have come down to us, where γυνή τ stands, this word is not to be found, and perhaps only later came to this originally figurative meaning, since the genus

can say: my dear woman [Weib], one is attached to woman [Weib, wife here] and child, yes "woman" [Weib] often has a poetic ring to it ("Kill his wife first" would do less well in Fidelio). In contrast, the majority of "women" [Weiber] really leaves a peculiar aftertaste in colloquial language. I don't know how that came about. Should one woman [Weib] please, but a greater number cause less pleasant sensations? However, out of consideration for the colloquial language, one cannot impose the compulsion to suppress the correct plural in scientific discussions about women [Weib]. It is intended to summarize all the manifestations of woman [Weib], but no other word can do that. If someone always wants to talk about "girls and women" [Frauen] in order to spare all sensitivities, this is not only very cumbersome, but often also wrong, because it is wrongly thought "not yet married and married" respectively, that is, social relationships are repressed, and because with "girls" you never know whether the broader sense or the narrower one (children and virgins respectively) is meant. So we want to talk about woman [Weib] and women [Weibern] also in the future and hope that the unjustified sentiment will cease.

Who should speak of women? I.e. who understands something about it? Or more correctly, since everyone understands something about it, who understands most of it? The women themselves? Yes and no. In any case, it will have to

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seems to point to something earlier different from it, e.g. to the building of the married couple, if, for example, *veiban* should have corresponded to *bivaibjan* [Goth. *To wrap around*]." Others point to Weibôn, wēban, float, sway, weave or *vip* in Sanskrit, being excited, enthusiastic, according to which woman should mean the mobile or the enthusiastic. It is remarkable that both in Southern Germany and in Lower Germany the term "[hu]man" [Mensch] in the sense of "maid" [Magd] occurs without the negative connotation that it has for us. In ancient times "man" was also used in the sense of *genus homo*, all kinds of people.

be heard. But there are two cases to be distinguished. When a woman judges the behavior and actions of another, she will often be very perceptive and see more sharply than most men. However, this also only applies provided the assessor and the assessed are on the same level. It is different with self-assessment. In general, the natural woman is neither inclined nor able to make statements about her inner being. She feels and acts out of feeling; analysis is something alien to her, indeed something improper, through which her internal world would be desecrated. Only a certain age and a certain degree of higher culture enable women to observe themselves. This is not infrequently striven for prematurely, but then very crooked views and untruths easily come to light, which one can observe often enough in young girls and the seemingly educated. So only mature and highly educated women come into consideration. Their honest confessions are certainly very valuable, but there is a danger here that they and others will unjustifiably generalize their self-observations and consider their refined and ennobled manner to be feminine in general. Also, even with a great love of truth, full truth will seldom be achieved, since all people, and women even more than men, are on the one hand subject to self-deception and on the other hand never completely undress themselves spiritually, always draping something, also in front of the neighbor. A diary that was intended to be kept secret, against the will of the writer, or only becomes known after her death, should deserve the most trust. And here too you have to be careful. Finally, the observations which women have made of their own kind as objective observers come into consideration. Here, too, one must remember that the feminine peculiarity is not inherently in tune with observation, that on average it is more difficult for women to free themselves from subjectivity than for men. If we refrain from doing this, the conditions remain mental ability on the one hand, experience on the other. Most women, apart

from the circle of family and friends, have the opportunity to observe only in society, but society, as the playground of all lies, is just the least suitable environment to do so. The minority gain experience as a benefactor, teacher, worker, traveler, etc. Most of the time, the observations relate only to individual social strata or natural groups. The object of comparison is also usually missing, as the opportunity to observe many and diverse people up close is seldom given. Of course there are exceptions: the random living conditions or the occupation (e.g. that of an actress) can provide an unusually favorable opportunity for observation.

It is evident that the disadvantage of the man, that he cannot participate directly in the inner life of the woman, is counterbalanced by some advantages. Even those who consider the factual difference between the male and the female mind as unnatural and caused by mistreatment of the female must admit that, as things stand, the male has more disposition to observe than the female, that he sees more impartially, more persistently and more consistently, and that life affords him more opportunity for observation. But the value of men as observers is very different. Here too, of course, it depends on ability and education, as well as on opportunity. Of the so-called educated classes, those who are trained by their profession to observe people will be at an advantage. The opportunity is of two kinds. First, the man must have had intimate female contact, he must have had not only mother, sisters and other female relatives, but also sexual companionship. In general, the husband will be better qualified than the one who knows only love affairs, for these relations often do not last long enough, and the female participants are often of too little value. On the other hand, many a husband is inhibited partly by love, which blinds, and partly by consideration, which wants to avoid any hurt. Accordingly, the most favorable circumstances would be those of the married man. Secondly, the man's profession must

enable him to observe as closely as possible a great number and variety of women. Taking everything together, two professions offer the most favorable opportunities, that of the doctor and that of the priest. The Catholic clergyman is excluded from the sexual community, but confession gives him such a wealth of information that he is in some respects inaccessible. Next to him stands the physician, who usually has the advantage of conjugal knowledge, and who, as an observer of Nature by profession, is, so to speak, technically better qualified. Moreover, the physician is also a kind of confessor, and especially in Protestant countries this role falls to him. Among the physicians again two types are particularly favored, the gynecologist and the neurologist. For the gynecologist, Runge has explained this very well; he has also refuted the foolish objection that the doctor has to deal only with sick women.<sup>31</sup> If the gynecologist penetrates more into the sexual life, the neurologist has to deal mainly with mental states, and in this respect he gains experiences which are rarely accessible to others. Other professions are in a much less favorable position. The Protestant clergyman has by far fewer favorable opportunities than his Catholic colleague and the physician. The lawyer usually has only one-sided experience, since he faces "inferior" material. This concern recurs also in the case of some administrators (the directors of women's prisons, etc.), although it must be recognized that it is precisely in certain relations that the representatives of the State penetrate deeply. Those who teach girls also have their special advantages, but they are at a disadvantage because of the restriction to immature age. The least favorable are the desk people, the theoreticians, who often draw their knowledge only from literature and their own wives. Of course, the above applies

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<sup>31</sup> It was only after my essay had appeared that I read Runge's *The Woman in her Sexual Character* (4th edition, Berlin 1900). I am all the more pleased about our agreement in all things essential.

only in general; in reality, personal value comes to the fore. Clergymen and doctors, who lack the best, lose their advantages, and highly gifted, perceptive men are able to draw rich profit from relatively meager experiences, especially if they know how to properly make use of the experiences of others. Kant, for example, is an excellent judge, although his experience cannot have been great. Even he who is rich in experience will not rely on this alone, but will make use of the experiences of others to the best of his ability. This is how everyone proceeds involuntarily. Only, when using literature, one should never forget the question whether the writer was favored by his circumstances in the sense used there. Writings of influential men are suspicious from the start; if it turns out that experience was bad, you will know where you stand; you will not value the judgments of Stuart Mill, of Bebel and other deluded theorists more highly than they deserve.

The matter of brain weight is like this. Th. L. W. von Bischoff<sup>32</sup>, Professor of Anatomy in Munich, weighed 559 male

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<sup>32</sup> *The human brain weight*. Bonn 1880. 8 ° 171 pp. and tables. Whoever wants to know something more must read the excellent work for himself; he will then be ashamed of Bischoff's frivolous denial. Incidentally, it is a shame to refer to Prof. Brühl's statements. Here I just want to give a few more details from Bischoff. "We must therefore apply a relatively equal weight proportion to the somatic functions of the brain in both sexes and, after this consideration, relate the weight difference between the two brains only to the psychological functions of the brain." The races and nations known up to now have a mean brain weight of adult men considerably greater than that of women ... This fact of the considerable difference in weight between the male and female brain, to which this other fact is added, namely that the minimum brain weights are found only in women, the maximum only in men, is of the greatest importance in view of its universal, invariable validity, which no other in the whole field of brain weight theory can match. The following result is important for the second part of my essay. "The increase in brain weight in men reaches its maximum between the

and 347 female brains. He found the heaviest weight of the male brain to be 1925 g, the female 1565 g, the lightest weight of the male brain 1018 g, and the female 820 g. The average of all weighings was 1362 g for the male brain and 1219 g for the female brain. Bischoff himself dealt with the possible objections to his work and especially rejected the opinion that the results could be different due to the so-called relative brain weight. In fact, there is nothing to be said against Bischoff's statement (which agrees with the results of other investigators). Now, brain weighing is not an easy thing and only the anatomist can do it. Measurement of the head offers a substitute. If you look at the very rare abnormally shaped heads, e.g. the so-called "tower heads", one can safely assume that the largest circumference of the head is proportional to the size of the head and thus the size of the brain. Of course, the determination is not completely accurate, but that is not the point of the situation. There can be no doubt for the expert that in general the size of the head increases with the size of the mental faculties. Of course, one has to consider height, a big head will be more meaningful on a small body than on a large body, and vice versa. One must also bear in mind that one-sided abilities (individual talents) need not correspond to a large brain at all, but only to a brain that is large in certain directions. Protests against these simple and undoubted things recur in the newspapers with striking tenacity. One wonders, *cui bono*? If you have measured a large number of men, you are convinced that all those whose mental faculties are above average have comparatively large heads, 57 cm in circumference and more. At 56 and 55 cm mental proficiency is not excluded, but this

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ages of 20 and 30, in women up to the age of 20, while in women between the ages of 50 and 60, in men between the ages of 60 and 70 years of life there is an increasing drop." Recently, Bischoff's results have been confirmed by Marchand's. (*About the human brain weight*. Biolog. Central-Blatt XXII. 12. 1902.) Cf. a. p. 29 and p. 5.

does not often coincide with such numbers, while poor abilities are quite common among them. On the other hand, less than 55 cm is found almost only in men with very poor mental endowments; indeed, at 53 cm one can almost certainly expect pathological conditions. This also applies to short men. If one now measures female heads, one finds girths of 56, 57 cm, but also very often 52, 51, even 50. These low numbers come from adult women of medium height (160 cm and more) and of good mental abilities before (i.e. they have learned well in school and do everything their position in the family demands, speak foreign languages and have good judgment in conversations). When I see that a man measuring 165 cm with a 53 cm head circumference cannot meet very simple requirements, and a woman of the same size with a 51 cm head circumference outperforms many of her peers in intellectual ability, I cannot regard that as something indifferent. Once you have been convinced of the regular recurrence of the numbers, even individual cases that seem to break the rule can no longer make you mad. I attach importance to these things because they are very simple and accessible to everyone<sup>33</sup>.

There is just as little objection to Rüdinger's investigations as to Bischoff's. At most one can say that it is desirable to increase the number of cases and also to examine other areas of the brain surface. So far, however, Rüdinger's investigations are almost alone, and their significance is great enough. The most important thing seems to me to be that he has demonstrated the visible sex differences in the brains of newborns.

The whole dishonesty of feminist literature shows itself in the behavior against unwelcome facts. When serious scholars have established anatomical facts through years of

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<sup>33</sup> Please refer to my essay on *Sex and Head Size* published in 1903.

conscientious and painstaking research, some ignorant person declares that in their opinion there is nothing to be said about it, and the others parrot it.

In a criticism directed against me it says: "In the past, to justify female inferiority, emphasis was placed on the small size of the woman's brain. But since it turned out that the brain weight of the main proponent of this view ... was below the average weight of female brains, this evidence has been dropped." I regret that I have to go into such – let's say misleading – statements, but it can't be helped. Everyone must relate that statement to Bischoff. To be as safe as possible, I turned to Prof. Bollinger, who dissected Bischoff. He was kind enough to inform me that Bischoff, who died at the age of 76, was about 180 cm tall and had a brain weight of 1330 g. According to Bischoff's own table, the mean brain weight in men aged 70-85 is 1279 g (calculated from 24 cases, including B.'s 79-year-old father with 1452 g). As a result, Bischoff's brain weight exceeded the mean for men. According to Bischoff, the mean brain weight in women aged 70-82 years (18 cases) is 1121 g. It is difficult to say how much the decline in old age accounts for in individual cases. On average, according to both Bischoff's and Boyd's tables, a man will have lost 100 g or more in the eighth decade. Since the skull does not change significantly with age, the dimensions of the skull would also allow conclusions to be drawn about the good days of the elderly. Strangely enough, the 82-year-old Pettenkofer had a height of around 160 cm and a brain weight of 1330 g.

Where does your anger against "the new woman" come from, I am asked. Certainly not for personal reasons, because I am all alone and have no more personal wishes, and a new woman has never harmed me. It was on seeing Ibsen's Nora that a real anger seized me. The point in this play is that Nora, who is portrayed as a stupid little woman, finally goes up and

away because, in her opinion, her husband treated her as a doll. I don't know what Ibsen was actually thinking: As a rule, one cannot find out what the pharmacist-poet wants.<sup>34</sup> To his credit I would like to assume that he mocked the attitude to which Nora pays homage with grim scorn. But now I had to see that people saw a heroine in the degenerate, half-crazy person who leaves her children in a lurch because she thinks she has to educate her wretched self. This outraged me, and the more I thought about it, the more hideous and repugnant it seemed to me. In fact, the deep immorality of individualism cannot be more accurately portrayed than when Nora's running away. A woman who is unfaithful to motherhood through wild passion may be forgiven, but a mother who abandons her children because she does not feel well educated is a monster or, if one changes point of view, an insane person. Nora is a theatrical specter, but the admiration she has found shows that something is rotten in Denmark. How is it that the bad and the sick please? Are the people sick themselves, are our wives as degenerate as Nora? I think the following view is correct. The unnatural way of thinking of a considerable part of the living, by virtue of which the individual development of the female spirit is valued higher than the fulfillment of the natural purpose, is to be compared to a mental epidemic, a mass delusion, a suggestion through a powerful idea. So it is not an actual mental illness, but the mass suggestion would not have been possible if an abnormal state of mind had not prepared the ground for it. It is important to first consider the ideas that exercise the suggestion, then the conditions for their reception. The thoughts on which the so-called emancipation of women is

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<sup>34</sup> If only a kind fate would deliver us from all the Nordic and other lazaret poetry! [From Goethe: "The [Romantic] poets all write as if they were sick and the whole world a hospital. [...] I have found a good word [...] to annoy these gentlemen. I will call their poetry the lazaret poetry."]

based are not new. In 1600 e.g. appeared a book by Moderata Fonte, married name Giorgi, a Venetian born in 1555 and who died in 1592, *Il merito delle donne* [*The merit of Women*], in which she stated that women outdone men<sup>35</sup>. In the old days, however, such ideas did not catch. Liberalism had to come to power first. Its purpose is the liberation of the individual. It began its work already in the Middle Ages, became big and strong in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and exploded, so to speak, with the French Revolution. Certainly, liberation was a great gain, but all things have two sides. In itself, freedom is nothing but a negation; if nothing is striven for but freedom, the sovereignty of the individual, then perfect anarchy must be the end. As long as a movement grows, hope turns to it, and it appears to the hopeful as thoroughly good. No idea shines more than that of liberty; it acquired quite an incomparable power of suggestion during the avalanche-like swelling of liberalism. Everything had to be liberated, and finally also woman. Freedom of woman is called an 'intoxicating suggestion.' Freedom from what? From all bonds of course, it should have to be called consequently, freedom from prejudices, freedom from the man, freedom from the child. Of course, they were not that consistent; at first, they said: human rights. That there are no abstract human beings was irrelevant, the woman should stop being a woman, become "a free human being." Fish are still caught with this bait today. On closer examination it must be said that there is a great difference whether the man or the woman surrenders unconditionally to the suggestion of freedom. To the man, may he be a physically wandering hunter or a mentally wandering thinker, a certain degree of freedom is a vital need. The natural woman does not want freedom at all; her happiness depends on being tied down. This is connected to the diversity of

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<sup>35</sup> See a. Guillaume, Mario Anne, *Que le sexe féminin vaut mieux que le masculin* [*That the Female Sex is better than the Male Sex*], Paris, 1668.

purposes. The one-sided liberalism of man is an exaggeration, a going too far on the right path; that of woman is contrary to Nature, a wrong path. It cannot be said, therefore, that the modern individualism of man, even if it leads to perversities, necessarily presupposes a morbid nature. But it must be said that female individualism is not possible without it. What is the morbid condition that makes the woman susceptible to the suggestion of freedom? It is the modern nervousness. An essential characteristic of the form of degeneracy which we call nervousness consists in the unsettling of the natural instincts. The healthier a person is, the more decidedly they are man or woman. In the nervous person, however, masculine-feminine traits appear, feminine men and masculine women appear. Thinking, which lacks firm support, becomes uncertain, man no longer knows quite what he wants, he strives in all directions, but the outstretched hands grasp nothing; many desires and little strength. I cannot go into the details here, I only want to emphasize that nervousness is, according to my conviction, the main condition for female individualism, that the healthy woman rejects the deceptive suggestions of freedom, guided by a sure instinct<sup>36</sup>. Now it cannot be denied that the so-called

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<sup>36</sup> I read Laura Marholm's book with pleasure: *On the Psychology of Women* (Berlin, 1897). With a certain degree of displeasure too, of course, because she says some things that I thought I came up with first. This title would perhaps have been even better: *On the Psychopathology of Women*, because the types and figures described by the author are only forms of nervousness or degeneracy. Even if a great deal of what Mrs. Marholm says is excellent, it seems to me that she attaches too much weight to her distinctions and, in the alternation of the decades and intellectual fashions, sees something more significant than there actually is. There is such a thing with historical changes that what appears to be great up close becomes small with some distance. The individual forms of the disease are scarcely to be regarded as peculiarities of the present, weakness alone is characteristic, which is based on weakness of the instincts. The

women's movement has other underlying conditions as well. The most important of these is social hardship. Through the entanglement of life and the increase in population, through the development of knowledge, the increase in interactions, etc., there is partly insight into the old hardships, thoughtlessly endured in the past, partly new hardships are brought about. Liberalism itself also increased hardships by destroying the old bonds; isolation promoted strong individuals and harmed the weak. Now, freedom cannot remedy hardships; here we need justice and love. In fact, the desire to improve living conditions has always been linked to freedom, and liberalism has also taken the lead in the women's movement, so that those striving for justice felt obliged to call for freedom above all. Finally, I must point out a peculiar psychological behavior which facilitates the suggestion of the idea of freedom in women. The virgin is kept in uncertainty about her instincts by Nature. Resistance to the man, the rejection of sensuality, appear to the consciousness of the virgin as unconditional and permanent, although by their nature they are temporary and basically only protective measures. The better a girl is, the more firmly she is convinced that she has no desire for a man, that at all times her mind will only be turned towards the Ideal. Yes, the man who has no real understanding of this pure striving and wants to pull the girl over to his point of view easily appears as an enemy. In this way it becomes understandable that especially high-minded girls will like the rallying cry: Independence of women, freedom

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nervous weakness then varies depending on the types that recur at all times.

Mrs. Marholm also sometimes exaggerates, as if the entire female sex corresponded to her description. Fortunately, there is much healthier than that. But, of course, in society and in literature you mainly meet the excited, the sick: the good sit at home, at work. It's like in Paris: If you walk on the streets, you might think that the entire female population consists of prostitutes, but there too the good ones are at home.

from men! If the sermon resounds at the right time, it will find adherents to the new doctrine among the virgins. If they later get to know love, the whole fuss usually disappears, love alone remains, and the earlier striving only awakens a smile. When children are born altogether, the mental teething troubles are completely forgotten. If marriage does not take place, however, the ideas that have been implanted are usually retained, the more firmly so the greater the feeling of emptiness. Even in childless marriages it will often not be any different. The more persistent the striving for freedom, the more likely it will end in a pathological way. Some healthy young girls say: "I'm not getting married, I want to stay free." You know how things are and you laugh at it. But if a girl gets through her resolve despite being shown love, then in all likelihood she is pathological. A woman who doesn't want to have children, or who says after the first one: "once and not again", is definitely a degenerate being. It is even worse when a woman neglects or abandons her children for the sake of her selfish or delusional pursuits. The path of thoughts from Nora's first instance of anger to this point is long, and on the way the anger has evaporated. Philosophical contemplation is not at all compatible with anger; it reveals misguided ways and a pathological lack of natural feelings as the source of evil. In the meantime, one remains human, and when one hears the glorification of the bad, the anger stirs again and again. And anger also has its benefit, it drives to action, and action is not hopeless in our case, because suggestions can be eliminated, and all earlier mass suggestions have been successfully fought by the fact that individuals countered them with the better knowledge they had.

Perhaps there are harmless souls who think I am exaggerating, that the "women's movement" does not lead to the denial of Nature at all, that the roughness of feeling is not at all linked to the "striving for something higher." Such intermediaries are very much mistaken. Of course, most of

those who join the movement stop halfway, but the movement itself has the compulsion to go to the end. But the end is freedom from the child. If the woman should hold up anything, it is the name of 'mother.' I have written that Nature demands from women, not the achievements of men, but maternal love and loyalty. A female critic puts it this way: "In my opinion, women are only suitable for "giving birth and caring for the brood."" Hear: brood keeper! Then one wouldn't talk about degeneracy.

My characterization of woman is judged in three main ways: either it is said to be essentially wrong, or it is essentially correct, but only fits the average, or it is essentially correct, but only applies to present conditions.

I cannot consistently defend myself against the opinion that I have asserted wrong things, because the negotiations would go on without end. I can only mention a few misunderstandings which I am keen on clearing up. To my regret, people whose good opinion is important have believed that I consider women immoral, although I have expressly opposed this. I must adhere to the fact that female morality is incomplete, inadequate in so far as it is essentially emotional morality. This is also nothing new, e.g. E. v. Hartmann set out the matter in detail. It seems that it was less the reference to the lack of justice than the reference to the need to lie that hurt. This is evidently related to the fact that in wider circles lying is viewed as something absolutely immoral, a wrong opinion that was mainly promoted by Kant. We all lie and must lie, be it with words or through silence, or through mere movements. Lying is entirely justified as long as it is a matter of self-defense; it only becomes immoral if it is used for personal gain or even for direct harm to others. The disguise or lie necessary to women in the sexual life is self-defense and therefore blameless. I thought I had made myself very clear, but it didn't help, so I have to say it twice. The other

grief is that I half-jokingly quoted the paradox that women are supposed to be "healthy and stupid." Here, too, I had thought that the reader would understand me and not take stupidity literally, but know that what was meant was "unlearned." In various places in my writings I have pointed out how important the intellectual abilities of the mother are for the sons, and that in the choice of marriage the girl's cleverness is very important. Fortunately, I myself have had a clever and good mother, and I am convinced that I owe a large part of the abilities I have to her. The memory of her alone would keep me from ever writing anything "against women." But the "Mother's wits" [quick-wittedness] is what counts, natural abilities, not knowledge and learned skills. Thirdly, I have said that female talent is simply the disposition for love affairs. Now I am supposed to have said that women would otherwise have no talents. I want to add that there are other female talents besides the main one. I don't mean the musical, the painterly, or any artistic talent. If a woman has one of these, she actually has a male talent. It seems that only acting – and to a certain extent poetic talent – can be regarded as the original property of both sexes. A female talent, on the other hand, in the strict sense of the word, is the talent to chat, or if that sounds irreverent, the talent to talk. That became quite clear to me when I recently read a book about Rahel Levin, married name Varnhagen von Ense<sup>37</sup>. At first I felt nauseous at times while reading, but then I became interested in the question, what is this woman all about, and so I managed to get through the 460-page book. Rahel was undoubtedly a clever and benign woman. She was honest, serious, liked to think, and had a penchant for philosophical musings. But all this does not explain the role she played. She did not produce anything, she could not write anything coherent either in verse or in prose, she did not get beyond

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<sup>37</sup> Rahel Varnhagen, *A portrait of life and times by Otto Berdrow*, Stuttgart, 1900.

letters and aphorisms. Her style is original, rich in arbitrariness and linguistic errors. New thoughts are completely absent. Everything she says can often be found in contemporary writers; at most, she may have given a new version to a thought here and there. The constant self-reflection, the talk in superlatives about one's own person, which is always presented as unique and incomparable, is strongly repulsive. Everything is exaggerated, horrible suffering and exuberant happiness alternate. Goethe would call her a tense person. Despite the lack of poetic or scientific achievements, a whole literature has been formed about Rahel. One has to take into account a tremendous, partly unintentional, partly ingenious, advertisement, but the woman must have been something special. She had a genius for chatter. She had learned and experienced a lot, had a good memory, presence of mind, enormous liveliness, and in addition to that the infinite desire to chat. She could talk wittily for many hours, day after day. Her biographer calls her a "sociability fanatic": she lived, so to speak, from talking. Miraculously, there lived with her a second genius-of-chatter, Bettina Brentano, married name von Arnim. This woman was less serious and honest than Rahel, but surpassed her significantly in poetic ability and creative power. She is especially interesting because of her mendacity; she lied quite involuntarily and reminds strongly of the *Pseudologia fantastica* described by Delbrück [Pathological lying, first described in the medical literature in 1895 by Anton Delbrück]. In general, it was a talkative time then; the important men also chatted and found a strange satisfaction in the trivial salon talk. But the men had poor talents when it came to talking back and forth compared to the aforementioned women. Varnhagen, who was very much like an old lady, seems to have distinguished herself.

Those who say that my description only fits the average person are quite right. But, dear ones, I didn't want anything

else. How can one do more on a few printed pages and how many pages would it take if all deviations from the average were to be mentioned? In the case of measurable things, in addition to the mean, you can also specify the maximum and the minimum, but the matter is not that simple here. The main features of the differences between the sexes are known, but it is also known that mixtures occur. Just as both sexes have their brain convolutions in common, they obviously also have all spiritual properties in common, and only one more there, one less here makes the difference. Nobody can say exactly to what extent a predominantly male ability can develop in a woman and vice versa. That already applies to the norm, but now, under pathological conditions, the mental hybrid formations are added, which are probably much more frequent and more significant than one usually thinks. Especially when one talks about the conditions of our time, one must never forget that our civilized peoples are extraordinarily permeated with pathological elements. However, such broader considerations seem alien to my critics. Your only concern is that I should not have given enough consideration to women who are above average. You reproach me of not thinking of the female saints, the benefactors of society, the good princesses, the witty women of all kinds. Do you really think I'm that stupid? But it is a natural mistake that we tend to forget the rule for the exceptions. If there are individual luminous points on a long line, they attract our eyes and we forget the long, dark stretches between them. Many writers seem to have no idea of the nature of the real people. For example, I am rebuked because many old women are quick-witted. I know that just as well as my critics. But go out into the crowd, compare the fifty-year-old man with the fifty-year-old woman, examine them, do not let glibness and assumptions count for intellectual activity, then it will be clear whether or not I am right. In general, my doctrine of the parallelism of mental development and mental decline

with physical development and physical aging has met with much unjust criticism. The future will teach that there was a special merit in pointing out these much neglected things.

The third group says that, on the whole, I may be right, but that is only because the female mental faculties have not been sufficiently developed so far. Development is everything; if we develop, we can become whatever we want. First of all, the further development of the female sex can be understood as a process in a mystical-Darwinian sense, as one that proceeds by natural necessity, without purpose. Evidence for such a presupposition is entirely lacking, for history speaks directly against it; there we see variations in this and that sense, but on the whole an unchanged insistence, so far as the essentials are in question. If we read, for example, in the Old Testament, we see that the behavior and position of woman at that time, i.e. on average about 2500 years ago, was about the same as it is now. Aristophanes describes a "women's movement" that was quite similar to ours. The Roman women also had about the same position as our women. On the other hand, in many areas of the Orient, women still have the same relatively unfavorable position as they did 1000 or 2000 years ago. The position of women does not seem to depend either on the time period or on the character of the people, which, of course, embraces the character of both sexes. Some of those who have heard that for the development of the species very long periods of time are required, may reply: "What are a few thousand years for us?" History so far does not prove at all that the development is not yet to come. Such people may live up to their faith, but they must also allow us to assume that as in the last millennium, so in the next; no essential change is to be expected. Others understand by development a conscious intervention, a kind of planned education. They think that if only girls were taught enough and the barriers of custom and law were broken down, then the mental abilities of the female sex would be no

different from the male's. These whimsical saints are difficult to talk to. If you point out facts to them, for example, the history of music, etc., they do not respond. If one points out to them the impossibility that a woman could fulfill the tasks that Nature has distributed to two sexes, they think on the contrary that they can do it. I have argued that if the wishes of the feminists were fulfilled, the birth rate would have to fall to such an extent that the class or the nation would not be able to maintain itself. The answer is that the highly educated woman will bear only few children, but she will bring them up all the better. One should remain serious! One comes to the point where all negotiation stops. I only want to make one remark, that the nonsensical overestimation of education, which one always encounters in these negotiations, is a sign of backwardness. It is fitting for the 18<sup>th</sup> century; whoever lives today should know that no education can produce abilities, that all education that wants to be more than loving encouragement of natural development and prevention of harmfulness does more harm than good. Unfortunately, I cannot conceal the fact that the clergy and teachers who imagine they are "forging characters" and performing similar feats have greatly aided and abetted the follies on which the feminist movement thrives. I encountered a particular view in a letter. The natural woman corresponds to my description, but it is the task set by God that she becomes a refined cultural woman through self-education. No one can wish more than I that there be many noble and intelligent women; I just do not see that their number will be increased by the feminists. The natural woman is certainly also a woman willed by God, and all refinement can only consist in the further development of natural dispositions. If it is the natural destiny of woman to be a true mother, then ennoblement can only consist in the fact that the woman goes deeper and deeper into motherhood, that she puts all her knowledge and ability at the service of her noble profession. A natural disposition is

something sacred, and it cannot be in the sense of eternal wisdom if we interfere with Nature because overexcited people have made up preternatural ideals. The sentence – a woman who is not a mother has failed her profession – remains true, however harsh it may sound to those who see themselves excluded without guilt. But it must be added that the woman who has no children can also be useful through her maternal qualities. The extent to which knowledge and skills are required of the main occupation, or to get by with it, depends on the circumstances, the level of culture in general, and the class. A woman of the lower middle class will get little use from speaking several languages, painting, and learning art history or something else; indeed, the acquisition and possession of such skills would lead to many disadvantages. A prince's wife, on the other hand, whose circumstances exclude her from actual work, requires many knowledge and skills in order to fulfill her position, which in the lower classes would be superfluous or harmful luxury. I think these things could be agreed upon. If we disregard such class differences, one can say for the middle classes that knowledge and skills are a beautiful ornament in a (real) woman, as far as they promote or at least not disturb the activity dedicated to the family. It is also appreciated in a man if he has more than just the skills absolutely necessary for his profession, but he is reprimanded as soon as he disturbs his professional activity through allotria [tomfoolery]. That should be said with the amiable letter-writer in mind, although it actually goes without saying.

Once I've gotten that far, it sounds in my ears as such: "Praise motherhood as much as you want, but not all girls can become mothers, and that's why we have to educate our girls so that they can stand by themselves." Although these things are not my subject, I would like to say a few more words. I have already suggested that we could have more mothers and more human happiness if we did not only consider the children born

in marriage. One could be more generous. At least I would have respect if a girl said: "This is my child that I care for, whoever I have it from is none of your business." "Cease, unfortunate one, you are touching the foundation of the Christian state!" Stop lying about the Christian state, it is as unchristian as possible. If our lives did not ooze lovelessness and hypocrisy, it would be easier to care for the girls properly. If you now speak to parents who belong to the so-called better classes, they will say: "Yes, our daughter is supposed to take the teacher's exam, it is quite difficult for her, one has to consider all eventualities." Now the teacher's exam is torture, to say the least, and those who have passed it by sacrificing part of their health do not exactly strike it rich. But everything else is not "befitting." What do women do among all peoples? In addition to taking care of the children, they take care of the kitchen and the household in general, they procure the clothes, at least in part, buy and sell, depending on the situation. Why should that, of which our housewives are not ashamed, be too bad for the girls who are dependent on income? Why not honor all honest work? It depends only on the dismissal of old prejudices. If a girl said: "I want to be a cook, but I demand a decent room and treatment appropriate to my personality", she would be doing herself and others a favor. Actually, there are a lot of sensible people, and they would, after all, gladly take in cooks, maids, etc. from educated families on the condition that they treat them like their own kind. This would also help the servants' plight, for which the arrogance and indifference of the masters are just as much to blame as the deficiencies of the uneducated servants, who are usually left to their own devices and bad examples from childhood. In addition to domesticity, the mercantile system would still offer accommodation to many women if, on the one hand, the work was respected and, on the other hand, the merchants were forced to respect the health of their workers. In any case, if the working hours are not too long and the wages sufficient, service

in the merchant's house or store will be better than the ghastly dryness of the telephone, telegraph, postal service, etc. Also the commercial activity offers the possibility of becoming independent. Female paid employment will always be a necessity, but it cannot be avoided in our circumstances. Whether things will get better later is not known. A real progress for the better would be the return to the monastic idea. The radical fight against monasticism was and is one of the greatest follies of the Reformation and of liberalism. Recently, monastery imitations have been unconsciously evoked, such as the deaconess-houses, the [religious] sisters-houses in general. But one should attack the matter much more fundamentally. To a convent in the humane sense belong the following: 1. A disinterested purpose. That is, a number of people of the same sex must join together to pursue the same goal. The purpose can be to help those in need, but it can also be a scientific or any other purpose, only the pursuit of personal gain is excluded, and the purpose must have the dignity of a life's work. 2. The common life of those bound by the purpose in the sense that the participant ceases to be concerned about his own person. The member makes the purpose of the community his own, and in return the community takes care of the individual. Vows for life are contrary to our way of thinking, but in a certain sense the old vows would keep their right, because obedience is indispensable, chastity comes naturally (one is free to leave), and poverty means having nothing of one's own. It goes without saying that many modifications are possible, but it can be said in general that the nobler the purpose and the more complete the devotion, the greater will be the happiness of the individual. This too is certain, that especially for the female nature the monastic life in the sense meant here will most likely grant a substitute for natural happiness. Perhaps the need must still grow before reason penetrates, but it will.

If we return from the hopes for the future back to the girls' education, it actually goes without saying, since even now the majority of girls marry later, that everything should be aimed at preparing them for marriage. From this point of view, current education is of little value. The individual cannot change that at first, but one must urge parents that they not throw all responsibility on public institutions. Your most sacred task should be to keep the girls healthy, then later may come what will: a sick girl is no good for anything. The arrogance level and the overestimation of the so-called intellectual education is the cause of an "unprecedented human sacrifice." One of the most important objections to the teaching and higher education of women is that, if something should come of the matter, the girl, just like the boy, would have to be trained for the profession from the age of 11, i.e. at a time who is not at all possible to make a judgment about the later development of things. Apart from the very rare cases in which a girl shows outstanding talents at an early age, the decision that the child should be raised for something other than the natural profession of woman is actually presumptuous. You often hear it said that what a girl needs as a woman can also be learned later. I don't think so poorly of the abilities of a capable housewife. If a girl gets married at the right time, i.e. from around the age of 18 to 23, there is enough time to make her fit for practical work while protecting her health. What has been said applies at least to the so-called middle class. May the new women be as they like, but they cannot do witchcraft, and one side would always be missing, even if they still had a little more than male intellectual powers.

Finally, if we take a look into the future, two paths are conceivable for those who hope for a better time after the turmoil of the present. Either one can think that the individualistic aberration is a passage for the female mind. Whereas in the past woman assumed her fate thoughtlessly, if

she served the purpose of the species in unconscious piety, then in the future, having recognized the error of her strivings for freedom, she can do the same consciously, and knowingly devote herself to the good of the self, but rather strive for that of man and children. Or one can be of the opinion that such a development from innocence to virtue through guilt is contrary to the essence of women, that the right woman must instinctively do what is right in the future too. In the sense of the first opinion, one should actually encourage mischief, because the greater the evils, the sooner the reversal is to be expected. If one agrees with the second view, then, insofar as human help is concerned, salvation must be expected from the man's insight, i.e. from the man making it clear to the woman that he does not want to know anything about the unconditional freedom of women. If the man is serious about it, then the »women's movement« is over.

The third edition also met with friendly and unfriendly interest. It has been found that this writing works very well as a reagent for female judgment. If you are not sure about a woman's abilities, you let her read "*Idiocy*." If she then thinks that the author is actually not that wrong, then you embrace her because she is an excellent woman. The test has proven itself valid quite often.

To the consolation of the critical ladies, I want to say that this time the weakest criticism comes from a man; it is in "*Youth*." I regret it, and the behavior of many men in general, because I just want to make men realize how foolish feminism is. But what prejudices do you have to struggle with! A psychologist friend visited me the other day. "You are wrong in your assertion that women are worth less than men." "I am not saying that at all; I'm just saying that their brains are less powerful." "You can't prove that either, can you?" "Well, simply by comparing the most important brain functions in detail, their maxima and the average." "You will surely find qualities there which are more highly developed in women." "Which one?" He thought for a while and then said: "Oh, the ability to self-sacrifice." Then I had to laugh and replied: "Oh, you psychologists, if someone beats you, moths come out. Is the ability to sacrifice a basic force? Isn't the value and meaning of a sacrifice quite different according to what and for what is sacrificed? Of course the lamb can be led to the slaughter, but is that an achievement? If one asks about the deed, there can be

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<sup>38</sup> Early foreword to the fourth edition.

no doubt that at all times man has made more sacrifices than woman.<sup>139</sup>

The question of morality in general is related to the question of sacrifice. All too often I have to hear: yes, intellectually women are below men, but not morally. The gossip is happy to take control of the matter: the man is the head, the woman the heart; or something like that is said as if flowery speeches led to clarity. It is embarrassing when one has to explain simple circumstances, but I would like to say a few more words for those whose own reflection is insufficient or who cannot calmly see reality. Everyone knows what "right" is when he has to act. It does not matter what morality he adheres to, whether he refers to a revelation or to reason, a voice that, of course, appears now loud and clear, now quiet and indistinct, tells him what is moral for him in the given case, and we call this voice conscience. You may think how you want about your conscience and how it came about, and only when the case is very complicated or the person is sick you don't know what you want and what you should do. If a person disdains the statement of their conscience, they act badly, if they pay heed to it but do something else, they act weakly, if they follow it, they act well. The wicked and the weak prefer their advantage to what's "right", whether it is a question of profit-seeking, vanity, love, or whatever else. If the good person does not follow these selfish instincts, which they also possess, they must have a special power which (subject to further discussion) can be called the moral faculty. The moral faculty can triumph either because it is particularly strong or because the opposing instincts are weak. In general, if moral action is to occur, the stronger the other instincts, the stronger that moral

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<sup>39</sup> One must not confuse the addiction to sacrifice with sacrifice itself. This is very common in nervous females and can become very unpleasant.

will have to be. It can be seen, therefore, that if the masculine instincts are stronger than the feminine at all, the man without a stronger moral force could not even attain the same morality as the woman. I think that in this line of thought it is easiest to understand how the woman seems to have an advantage in terms of morality here and there, because of the weakness of the disturbing instincts, just as, on the other hand, the right action is made more difficult for the man. But there is one more thing to consider. The ultimate goal or the highest good (one can also say: the will of God) consists in the fact that in the whole of space and time pleasure grows (expands and ennobles), discomfort decreases. The more – and the more successfully – a person turns to the highest good, i.e. the more they do God's will, the more moral they are in a higher sense. I would probably offend my readers if I wanted to prove from history and life that this active morality, which seeks the right, is more masculine than feminine. The error that woman equals or exceeds man in morality evidently arose not only from the fact that the moral faculty found on average less resistance in woman than in man, but also from the fact that woman, because of her Nature-given purpose, is mentally different, that in her the relationship of the instincts to one another is different. Because the structure of the female soul is simpler than that of the male, there is less struggle within it. The love of the spouse and the mother's love are so much stronger than the other instincts that under normal circumstances they achieve victory without difficulty. Female patience is praised. Wherever she is worthy of praise, in the nursery, at the sickbed, etc., she is carried by the feminine feelings of love. But in many other cases, in monotonous work, in enduring all sorts of adversities, there is a kind of dullness, a lack of strength and liveliness of the spirit. The man would become indignant or run away, he saves his patience for the occasions when it is worthwhile, and in the work appropriate to him his patience is great enough. It is the

same with the other "female virtues." If there is love behind it, it becomes something good. Otherwise, however, small negating virtues will result, or even simply denials. All parents know that daughters are easier to raise than sons, but they do not therefore consider them more moral than these. In life things are clear, but common sense ends in literature. One has a right to extol feminine virtues (and men have always honestly done so), but one speaks of the useful, the graceful, the touching, and does not always lead to the moral.

Now I would like to say a few more words about some of the books that I have recently got to know. F. Bettex<sup>40</sup> is a brave fighter, a Swiss who teaches in Stuttgart. He sets the differences of the sexes very well apart and shines a strong light on the babblers, the feminists. Admittedly, his use of biblical words is not to everyone's taste, and I cannot follow him in everything.

The most important question, to what extent motherhood is compatible with the spiritual work of women, has been investigated by Adele Gerhard and Helene Simon<sup>41</sup> in a commendable way. On the one hand they have studied biographies, on the other hand they asked a larger number of women working in one of the so-called higher professions for written statements. Specifically, they viewed the mother as an actress, a musician, a painter, a poet, a scholar, an agitator and a journalist. Of 420 "experts" who provided precise information, 156 were unmarried and 264 were married. 213 were childless (this includes the unmarried, the women without children, and those whose babies died at birth). There were 207 mothers. 147 had given birth to more than one viable child. (This information is inadequate; one should know how many children there are in the marriage, because there is a presumption that two-child

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<sup>40</sup> *Man and Woman*, Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1900, 2nd ed. 8°, 219 p.

<sup>41</sup> *Motherhood and Spiritual Work*, Berlin, 1901, G. Reimer, gr. 8°, IX and 333 pp.

marriages are all too common here). The overall result of the authors' investigations is as follows. For most areas, "it must be acknowledged in no uncertain terms that since the postponement of intellectual work to a later age sometimes meant damage – often direct atrophy of ability – a conflict between intellectual and artistic creation and the fulfilled life of women is unavoidable in the majority of professions. A solution to this conflict seems impossible to us, because both the suppression of women as sexual beings and the suppression of the creative instinct harbor dangers for the individual as well as the general public." If, as the authors acknowledge, there is a contradiction between woman's natural occupation and the artistic or learned professions, it goes without saying that this is contrary to feminine nature, and that the women who drive their dispositions to it have deviated or degenerated from feminine nature. The respondents do not want to know anything about my statement that "learned and artistic women are the result of degeneracy", but their entire book is nothing but proof of this proposition. But you don't have to understand the word degeneracy in the popular sense and think of something that is bad in every way. Double-flowered flowers are also [genetically] degenerate, although we enjoy them very much. From a practical point of view, the respondents must agree that the contradiction cannot be resolved. The unusually gifted girls are born whether we like it or not, and it would be useless cruelty to hinder really talented women. The female-talent bearers are victims, be it because they renounce their natural profession for the sake of their talent, or be it that as mothers they have to try to serve two masters. Now that's not a problem, because sacrifices have to be made, but it would be outrageous carelessness if, despite the knowledge of the contradiction, one wanted to drive the girls into that contradiction without need, i.e. without urging tendencies to do so. The emancipation of women is justified when either material

or spiritual need drives it, but it is itself a need because it arises out of need. Those, on the other hand, who overstimulate the female brain "for the sake of freedom" or otherwise on principle, play a shameful game. It is a great honor for them to acknowledge this, albeit with a heavy heart. Therefore, they may not be blamed if they see the "irreplaceable cultural value" of female labor as justifying what is questionable. It is understandable that they think as well as possible of the achievements of their sisters, just as they are extremely generous with the word "ingenious", but in truth it is so with irreplaceable cultural values. Only the actresses and singers are really irreplaceable. No sensible man will want to assert that female painters, sculptors, and scholars are irreplaceable. So there remains only poetry, and since the actual poets are *rarissimae aves* [rarest birds], the writing of novels. In fact, one hears again and again that the feelings and thoughts of the female writer are something very peculiar ("mysterious worlds"). However, as graceful as many women's books are, you will look in vain for anything new, indispensable. The authors e.g. seem to consider G. Sand irreplaceable, but it really would be no shame if these fundamentally unhealthy books did not exist.

May the conscientious work of the authors bring good fruit. May the proof of how difficult it has become for even the most intellectually endowed girls and women, this infinitely small minority, to do male work and yet be mothers, serve as a warning to the mass of the mediocre.

Recently a big book about the "woman question" by Lily Braun has been published<sup>42</sup>. It was written with great diligence and prudence. The author proves a clear judgment in detail and rejects many of the nonsensical feminist claims as ridiculous or

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<sup>42</sup> *The Woman Question, its historical development and its economic side*, Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1901, gr. 8°. XII. and 557 pp.

exaggerated. All her statements about facts<sup>43</sup> agree very well with my opinion. But good is mixed with bad because two basic beliefs dominate the author. On the one hand, she joined the general women's movement, which had set itself the goal of "liberating all women from their economic slavery through independent work", i.e. to make women independent from the evil man; on the other hand, she is a zealous social democrat and wants nothing but to put an end to the misery of the working people. She sees the "women's movement" as a product of need and yet wants to support it enthusiastically, she judges economic matters well and yet cannot break free from feminist folly. As far as the author speaks as a feminist and ascribes the same abilities to women as to men, little that is worthy of praise comes to light, indeed at times it is pure nonsense (on p. 191 she says that the imbecile have the largest frontal brain!). She starts the old fool's song that one does not yet know what everything is in the little woman's head, etc. Curious that the author admits that the female genius has been missing up to now, but at the same time declares that it will appear in social sciences (whereby modesty forbids one referring to one's own book). If the author abandoned feminist arrogance and accepted the physiological truth, her book would win, and what is most important in it would remain untouched. The feminists are led by an addiction to emancipation, they want freedom at all costs and ultimately arrive at anarchism. But this has nothing to do with socialism, which wants to remedy economic hardship through law and justice, not mere freedom. If the Social Democrats engage in feminist untruth, they are only damaging their cause. Equality in the reasonable sense can only mean that no one is wronged, that performance and consideration correspond to one another. But if one demands equality because all people are equal, as the old

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<sup>43</sup> Concerns have been raised about the exploitation of the numbers, but that is not my concern.

revolutionaries did, then one demands nonsense, because people are not equal, and least of all are the sexes equal. Ms. Braun will already have her experiences: the feminists *pur sang* [radical] will reject her, but someone who takes my point of view can calmly share her views about the workers. In fact, in the "proletarian women's movement" this nonsensical equality does not come into consideration at all. This is simply a matter of eliminating the misery that our unhappy living conditions create, of justice against the women and girls who have to earn their bread. The author shows us all the misery that depends on women's work. You can say that she is pessimistic because things are not so bad everywhere, but that doesn't change much, reality is dreadful enough. The author is probably also right in saying that only the energetic struggle of the female workers, allied with one another and at the same time with the male workers, against the employers can bring about a thorough improvement. I don't want to go into that, because judging economic theories is not my business. Just a few words about the ultimate goal. According to the author, the female worker should also remain a worker in the future society, only her life should be made easier by largely eliminating domestic work. We are willing to put up with the fact that cooking, washing, etc. is performed in central institutions, we also agree that the woman so relieved of her burden may make herself useful in other ways, but we hope that in a better future the sexes will be so differentiated that a job will be the main thing for the man and a minor thing for the woman. True motherhood and professional fulfillment how man understands it will always be incompatible, and in the most distant future too; motherhood should be a woman's main job, her possible "job" being a secondary occupation.

#### IV.

I would like to bring to attention one of the counter-pamphlets directed against me – because it provides water for my mill in a special sense – namely Oda Olberg's book (*Woman and intellectualism*, Berlin-Bern, 1902). She has read a great deal of learned stuff, has thought about it eagerly, and, in contrast to the other fighting ladies, speaks of me throughout in a decent tone. She has grasped my train of thought quite correctly and understands its strength up to a point where modern confusion takes hold of her and understanding is extinguished. It is worthwhile to answer the knowledgeable and skillful author a little more precisely. She is an enthusiastic supporter not only of intellectualism in general, but especially of "modern intellectualism", and "modern ideas" are considered inviolable dogmas to her. The characteristic of every intellectualism is overestimation of knowledge on the one hand, of human arbitrariness – and especially of education – on the other. Modern intellectualism, however, gets its own unpleasant coloration by the fact that it is based on the "mechanical worldview" and "development" in the Darwinian sense. The moderns, and with them Oda, do not see in the mechanical world view any hypothesis, but the basis of their thinking, and it is therefore understandable that they consider very important the only purpose that exists according to their opinion, namely that of man. I, however, believe in a providence, i.e., in the fact that a spiritual power leads all things to certain ends, and I consider this to be correct, because it seems to me not only more conducive, but above all better founded. For our subject Darwinism is even more important. The intellectualists believe on the one hand in an unlimited development, on the other hand in the possibility to change the species by the influences mentioned by Darwin. It is true that

there are only probabilities in these general questions, but their degree is nevertheless different. To me the assumption of a now-just-as-before continuous development of the earthly kingdom seems to be quite low, and I consider it much more correct to assume that the whole earthly kingdom resembles a finished man in that it is born and grown, but is now adult. Thus I conclude from the "ontogeny" to the "phylogeny." Even the adult human being does not remain unchanged, he still increases in some respects, but in the main he remains approximately on the same level until the beginning of old age. If it is the same with the species, small changes are still possible now, but essential ones are not, and just as little as we have to expect the development of man into a superhuman, a change in the sexual characters once established is just as unlikely. Further, the modification of the offspring by acquired characteristics of the genitors, without which our author cannot do at all, is probably possible only within very narrow limits, if we disregard the corruption of the seeds. If it were possible in the presupposed way, an intellectual development of the male brain would have to suffice for the further development of the female brain. For if all men were knowledgeable, they would bequeath their developed brain also to their daughters, and since these would find only knowledgeable husbands, the whole race would soon consist of intellectuals. Unfortunately, it is not true – although indeed clever men usually have clever daughters – because the masculine qualities do not show in the daughters, these keep their little woman's head, and also their achievements do not attain the masculine greatness. Not only the species is set, but also the sexual differences in the species are set: despite small fluctuations, the same level always re-establishes itself. Where large fluctuations occur, there is, according to my opinion, not development of the species, but degeneration.

I say one-sided brain development is degeneration; no, says Oda, it is a beneficial adaptation and promotes the species. I said that education kills, Oda therefore considers me an enemy of culture and a reactionary. I'm not that bad. I mean, one could compare the so-called cultural work to conquering a country, because both demand sacrifices, and as the soldiers fall, the promoters of culture of the species are lost. The wealth of the sexes grows at the expense of those who acquire it. One should only make sacrifices where it is worthwhile. If one wanted to build an army out of the weak, one would have a great deal of losses and little gain. If one wanted to let women do the cultural work, the harm would be great and the benefit small. What is moderate exertion for the male head is overexertion for the female head, and in spite of all efforts, as Oda also admits, the female performance will never be equal to the male one. A great man can achieve incredible things, and if his offspring are no good, the harm is comparatively small. All intellectual women who have lived so far have not achieved as much as a single great man, and yet almost all of them have been harmed, and so are their offspring. The worst harm, of course, is infertility when it becomes widespread. I'll get to that in a moment, but first I have to emphasize the injustice Oda is doing against me. She always presents the matter as if I wanted dull women, and she uses the word idiocy in the usual sense without considering my definition of physiological idiocy. I would be an ass if I preferred stupid women to intelligent and energetic ones. The fact that I quoted the joke of "healthy and stupid," where stupid just means unlearned, shouldn't induce a woman as clever as Oda Olberg to credit me with the most horrific nonsense. That education makes people stupid in the wrong place, and that modern requirements are responsible for turning clear and capable children of Nature into wild geese, that is my opinion. Good instruction (that is, not that of the so-called higher schools), instruction on what women need to

know, and widening of the horizon in a sensible way, that is what I wish all girls from the bottom of my heart, because all of this can be achieved without causing understanding and health to suffer. But with all that, the physiological idiocy would persist, i.e. the natural differences between the masculine and the feminine spirit. If the women were as clever as I would like, they could understand that quite well. To the objection that if physiological idiocy existed, all talk would be useless because its lack of success would refute the "women's movement", I want to reply again as follows. Indeed, I believe that on the whole success will be zero, as long as the female achievements are to be made equal to the male's, but this negative success can only be achieved through great misery. Two classes can be distinguished among the "aspirants." The leaders are degenerate, they have (at least from the mental perspective) part of the secondary male sexual characteristics, i.e. certain talents and a drive for freedom. The path should be made easier for them, once they are there and one cannot change them, so then a violent restraint would be cruel. They will not achieve anything special, but they will find their own satisfaction in their man-like activity. The majority, however, consists of girls who go along with the fashion, or in whom the degenerates have implanted their suggestions. They should be saved, for not only do they cause harm, but they themselves suffer the greatest harm, and the more they suffer the further they stray from their natural path.

Now about fertility! I said that intellectualism is decreasing the birth rate. Yes, says Oda, that's true, but it's good. That is their real mistake. The less the offspring of an animal is threatened, the lower the fertility. Since human life is spared more with a high culture than with a lower culture, the further a culture advances, the less fertility is needed. Darwinian and social evolution are mixed up, also a fairly modern process. Indeed, as wealth and education grow, the number of children

is decreasing, mostly through conscious intention. That is perfectly correct and proof that so-called culture is a killer. Oda, however, recommends the kind of action named after Malthus. Because if fewer children are born, Oda believes that they will be better raised and educated. The women enlightened by intellectualism, who no longer want to know anything about the blessing of children, understand hygienic measures so that the few children that are born can flourish beautifully, and they are rich in spiritual resources, so that they can not only raise their children but also lead them to the heights of intellectualism. This educated "sociologist" puts this kind of stuff together because she cannot escape my conclusion and yet does not want to forego feminist endeavors. She ticks the box and points out how many children in working-class families perish. Wouldn't it be better if the parents only produced a few children and nursed them very carefully? Admittedly, we recommend limiting the number of children for poor families in the city, but that has nothing to do with our problem. Not for a lack of intellectualism, but for a lack of the most basic necessities of life, of milk, of air; in short social hardship kills the children of the poor in the city. Improve the abominable living conditions, remove above all alcoholism, and then the working class children will grow up just as healthy and happy as the children in the country. But the assertion that the "educated" woman raise her children better than the natural woman is simply nonsense. Where do the children thrive best? In simple circumstances and with good parents with a sound mind. Read the biographies of those who belonged to a group of children from poor parents. Recently, H. Ellis has shown, by English standards, that people of genius usually belong to families with many children, that on average, families with few children do not produce much that is excellent. I had found the same thing for mathematicians and artists before. You go out to the country, to communities where money is scarce and education

is scarce, but where misery and drunkenness are lacking, you will see what matters, and the intellectualistic phrases will become disgusting. All of these things are so simple that I would prefer not to discuss them at all if I didn't have to take "the weaker sisters" into consideration here. Much less than in the case of physical care, can intellectualism replace Nature in the education of the spirit. What education does a child need? The example of morally good people, especially good parents, and fellowship with people like them. It is an old story that children raise one another and that the more children there are, the easier it is. School comes later. Oda imagines that the woman without a "higher" education stands helplessly in the face of the mentally overgrown children, like a hen that has hatched duck eggs stands on the bank when the ducklings go into the water. Goethe's mother and many other examples best refute such claims. In a sense, the son must outgrow the mother, but the heart holds them together. If the heart is lacking, higher education does not help at all (compare Schopenhauer<sup>44</sup>).

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<sup>44</sup> "You are not an evil human; you are not without intellect and education; you have everything that could make you a credit to human society. Moreover, I am acquainted with your heart and know that few are better, but you are nevertheless irritating and unbearable, and I consider it most difficult to live with you. All of your good qualities become obscured by your super-cleverness and are made useless to the world merely because of your rage at wanting to know everything better than others; of wanting to improve and master what you cannot command. With this you embitter the people around you, since no one wants to be improved or enlightened in such a forceful way, least of all by such an insignificant individual as you still are; no one can tolerate being reproved by you, who also still show so many weaknesses yourself, least of all in your adverse manner, which in oracular tones, proclaims this is so and so, without ever supposing an objection. If you were less like you, you would only be ridiculous, but thus as you are, you are highly annoying."

What the restriction of fertility is all about can now be seen in France. It is true that Zola exaggerated a bit in his hymn of praise for fertility, but he was a person whose nature drove him to exaggerate, and basically he is right. Because, through the so-called two-child system, not only is the population progressively reduced, it is also deteriorating. This example is the best way to see the folly in Oda Olberg's claims. If the ladies do not want to believe me, they may listen to one of their sisters. Käthe Schirmacher made very good comments in an essay on "France's Population Concerns"<sup>45</sup>. I want to reprint an excerpt from it; perhaps that can save Oda's soul and save others from being seduced.

»The social quality of these *fils* or *filles uniques* [only sons and daughters] is no better than that of numerous brothers and sisters. Far from it. French children with no or few siblings are scared children, around whose existence and well-being everything in the family revolves, whose illnesses are a calamity, whose whims are law. They form the parents' weakness. Papa's one and only, Mama's idol; to be firstborn and the lastborn at the same time, no child can stand that. From the day of their birth onwards, a very undue, disproportionately large amount of attention is focused on their little person, making them sole rulers, self-rulers, masters of their parents, who give themselves to them with an often very short-sighted love: "With one child you are his slave, with six their master." Their principle is that you have to do your darling's every whim. The parents' comfort gets its money's worth with this pampering system, the same way monkeys love.

In a large family, on the other hand, commemoration is in the air, consideration and solidarity are practically taught there.

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*Letter from Johanna Schopenhauer to her son Arthur Schopenhauer, dated 6 November 1807. T/N*

<sup>45</sup> Westermanns Monatshefte, XLVI, 5 February 1902.

The characters steel and grind each other. The proportions of the individual are smaller, their claims are naturally lower, the estimation of one's own person is reduced to the correct level through comparison. A large family is a small republic preparing for practical life.

The only son, the only daughter, on the other hand, grow up as demanding autocrats in an unnatural environment, and they can only find their satisfaction at the *wishing table*<sup>46</sup>. They are consummate individualists, self-conscious egoists who have little social worth and little national utility.

For the son, this way of upbringing can be summarized as follows: "My child, you can count on your parents. See how we save for your future! You can also count on our relatives, our friends, who recommend you, sponsor you, and bring you forward! Also count on the government, which allocates numerous positions. It would have to be strange if you weren't to get one. However, since these places do not always bear enough and it is good to have butter with bread, you should marry a rich woman. That is our business, leave this trouble to us, we will find you the heiress."«

From a medical point of view, I have been reprimanded for being tolerant of female doctors. But I stick to my opinion: You shouldn't favor the cause, but not put anything in the way of individual girls who want to study medicine. As I said earlier, in contrast to mechanical movements, the lower the friction, the more likely this movement will stop. I find evidence of my opinion in the *New York Medical Monthly* of January 1902.

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<sup>46</sup> Tischlein-deck-dich. *The Wishing-Table, the Gold-Ass, and the Cudgel in the Sack* is a fairytale by the Brothers Grimm. The original German name is *Tischlein deck dich, Goldesel und Knüppel aus dem Sack*. [Whenever he says "Table, Deck Yourself" the table decks itself with the finest food and wine.] T/N

There (p. 42) it is reported that the administration of the Northwestern University Women's Medical School in Chicago has decided to close the institute after 32 years of existence because of an annual deficit of \$ 25,000. The *New Yorker* newspaper of January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1902 said that this would strike a very heavy blow to the so-called women's movement, because the claimant stated that the women in the chemical laboratory were no more up to the tasks than in the dissecting room. In the 32 years of the experiment, they first tried coeducation, but 15 years ago this facility was declared a failure and a special institution for female students was set up. "There is no demand for female doctors, the woman as a doctor of medicine has in no way met the expectations that were placed on her." This applies with exceptions of course, but even in women's and children's practice, the female doctors did not seriously compete with the men. Sometimes the strength of the women was insufficient, and sometimes the female doctors made demands that are incompatible with the practice of a profession. One thinks of the old adage that 'trees do not grow to the sky' [there is a limit to everything], but at the same time thinks that the 32-year experiment was a bit expensive and painful.

## V.

In my essay I said that it is reasonable that the law should treat women differently from men, given the mental difference between the sexes. From the legal side, I have received various approvals and I hope that my request will be met in the future. Equal rights for all is the greatest injustice. If the 17-year-old youth is treated more mildly than the man, then the woman must also be granted protection. I come back to these thoughts because a French book inspired me.

Dr. Paul Dubuisson, senior physician at the Sainte-Anne insane asylum in Paris and a forensic surgeon, has written a very interesting book about department store thieves<sup>47</sup>.

Not a day goes by when the Paris criminal chambers do not have to judge a woman who is accused of stealing in the Bon-Marché, the Louvre or the Printemps. If one considers that only a small part of these thefts are discovered, one understands that there is a significant phenomenon here. The astonishment grows when one learns that almost all department store thieves neither steal out of necessity nor belong to the habitual criminals, that they mainly belong to the wealthy and honorable middle class.

The department store thieves are marked as follows: they only steal in department stores; Most of them are well off, some even rich, so they could very well buy the things; the stolen objects are usually not necessary to them, since they often already have the items, indeed in abundance. When arrested, they usually admit the theft without further ado, not infrequently with a kind of sigh of relief, as if a burden were being removed from them. Many of them tell, without being

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<sup>47</sup> *Les Voleuses des Grands Magasins*. Paris, A. Storck et Comp.

asked about it, about similar thefts in the past and state that they will find such and such stolen things in their homes. In fact, a house search reveals such items which have been cleverly hidden, unused, often still labeled with the department store label, in cupboards, in dark corners, under the cover of upholstered furniture, and which can only be found with the thief's help. All of them agreed: "I couldn't resist – I lost my head – it all seemed to belong to me – I got more and more pleasure – if I hadn't been arrested, I would have taken more and more..." , etc.

How can you explain all these oddities? Obviously two things have to be taken into account, firstly the nature of the department store, and secondly those who were seduced therein. Today's department store is a masterpiece, because its owners have arranged everything with wonderful skill in such a way that the temptation to buy couldn't be greater. They tempt the visitors with absolutely ingenious art. Hardly ever a woman who went in with the determination not to buy anything comes out without a number of parcels. First, the desire is awakened by brochures and price lists, which are sent lavishly to the houses, and from which the readers gain the conviction that the purchase must be pure profit under the specified conditions. Soon the idea comes to them: there is no harm in going there, you can see it, admission is free, you don't have to buy it right away. Once the unfortunate woman is in the lion's den, she will be enchanted. At the sight of this overabundance of beautiful and good things, all desires for comfort, elegance, possessions awaken, and the female desire for pleasure is deeply aroused. The visitor can touch and turn all the delights at will, which is a pleasure in itself, because nobody asks or seems to care, she can even have the object of her desire sent to her house for a few days to view. The tempter has done even more, for the ladies, who are not supposed to be tired, have halls with benches in which journals, even food and drinks are offered free

of charge. The visitor should feel in the department store as in her home, only that everything is infinitely bigger, more beautiful, richer, that no effort is waiting for her, that everything is politeness, kindness. The department store employs the most pleasant and amiable young men it can get.

Only a few can resist all these temptations; most are seduced into purchases that not infrequently meet no need and exceed the available means. Many women are attracted to the department store as others are to the church, because here as there they find sweet excitement, even if the kind is different. Some fall in love with one of these caravanserais and can no longer live without visiting the Louvre, the Bon Marché or the Printemps every day or at least once a week. A young woman, who had just recovered from a serious illness, furiously required to go to a department store, went there, and died after a few days. She did not want to buy anything, but she longed for the atmosphere of her temple and for the sight of the beautiful things. Finally, it must be considered that the ladies exposed to temptation are deliberately made to think that they are completely unattended. When the visitor has found her goods, she calls one of the employees who has to lead her to the cashier, but who does not exercise any supervision. Only covertly a number of employees, who do not carry any sign, watch the buyers; nothing warns them, only after the theft the supervisor intervenes.

Despite all this, no honorable woman will steal. Unfortunately, experience shows that a lot of women, who were considered honorable and untouchable, get trapped. One might think that only after a fierce battle between good and evil thoughts this defeat is possible, and certainly sometimes such a battle takes place, but quite often, according to the confessions of the thieves, the matter has gone differently. The desire appears at once so violently that the hand grasps before the

head has thought. Afterwards, remorse may come, but even this does not always seem to be bad.

Apart from the professional thieves, who occasionally steal in the department store just as they usually do, and who are not very frequent, the department store thieves fall into two groups, namely into those who, although they are considered honorable, are morally weak without being ill in the narrower sense of the word, and into those in whom certain pathological conditions can be proven.

Although the psychological interest is predominantly in the first group, the physician can only report on those who have been assigned to him because of a doubtful mental condition. Dubuisson reports from personal experience about 120 cases. Among them were eight women suffering from the so-called cerebral softening (progressive paralysis) and three with other severe brain conditions. In nine of them the doctor could not find anything pathological. Of the remaining hundred thieves, nine were insane in the strict sense of the word (pathologically feeble-minded, insane, etc.). All the others were what is usually called mentally ill; they suffered from nervous weakness, from hysteria, and a part of these nervous persons was at the time of the criminal act in one of the critical times of female life (menstruation, pregnancy). Of course, a nervous disease does not directly drive to theft, but it reduces the willpower, it makes one inclined to intoxicating states, and as a rule, with the same moral dispositions, the sick person will succumb to temptation more easily than the healthy one.

In all this, it should not be overlooked that there is no gap between the so-called healthy and those whose illness should reduce their sanity. Imperceptible transitions lead from simple moral weakness to pathological incapacity to resist. There are probably degrees of temptation that no one is equal to, and in any case the number of victims corresponds to the size of the

temptation. The modern department store is simply too great a temptation for part of the female population, because its facilities tempt them to steal. But one should try to prevent evil, and in our case this would not even be difficult. All that is needed is a constant warning against stealing by visible guards who can be recognized by certain signs. Then many women, whose state of mind protects them from stumbling in ordinary life, but who are not able to cope with the excessive temptations of the storehouse, would be saved, and with them their families would be spared sorrow and disgrace.

For those caught, in whom mental disorders could not be proven, they were simply locked up as thieves. If the authorities had an understanding of the female state of mind, they would either not have to tolerate the department stores that present themselves as women's traps, or they would not have to hand over the individuals seduced to the strictness of the law.

It seems to me that this story with the department stores is quite a good example, and that one sees thereby how the physiological idiocy is to be taken seriously. Egalitarianism is evil everywhere, but gender egalitarianism is a particularly great evil.

## VI

I like to be taught, and I do like a book from which I can learn something. That's why I've read a lot of feminist books in recent years. Of course I experienced a lot of disappointments and, if space allowed, I could tell a lot of painful things. I will only give one example. Marie Stritt translated a book by Charlotte Perkins-Stetson (*Women and Economics*), which she calls a standard work along with Mill's book: *The Bible of the Women's Movement*. The original seems to have appeared in 1899, the translation is entitled *Man and Woman* (Dresden and Leipzig, H. Minden). Oh, I thought, that will be a good thing, and found something downright gruesome. The short meaning of the long explanations is that when the woman earns money herself, the evils that oppress us will disappear. Basically, the goal is not difficult to achieve, because if you no longer cook at home and take the (one would think, actually superfluous) children to an infant home, the woman can go into business as well as the man. One stands admiringly before this American wisdom. It would be fine if the author presented her nonsense in simple words, but no, she proceeds "scientifically", works with "sociology" like a savage swings his club, and presents the greatest fabrications as reliable knowledge. It assumes that in animals every female seeks her own food, but in humans the man nourishes the woman. The sentence is by no means right, because as much the farmer as the farmer's wife e. g. both work and acquire food. As far as the sentence is correct, however, the matter can be explained very simply by the long need for care of human children, on the one hand, by the increase in tasks beyond the foraging for food that is allowed by the far greater intellectual abilities or the far greater brain of the man, and the necessity of the division of labor that this brings about on the other hand. That sounds very prosaic compared to the fairy

tales of the author, who seems to pay homage to a Darwinism gone mad. According to her, the woman was originally everything, the man only an appendage, only there for the sake of procreation. She thinks of the little male among the spiders, which is occasionally eaten by the female, and seems to suspect that humans are descended from spiders. Only gradually did the man develop, and "the last stage of this development process was the elevation of the male of the genus *homo* to full equality with the female, which then even resulted in his temporary subordination" (p. 115). In any case, the human woman was originally just as skilled and strong as the man. Once, however, it occurred to the poor fellow, the man, to subjugate the woman and restrict her to sexual activity, and misfortune wanted him to succeed in this shameful deed. When this was no longer the case, women became "economically dependent," and that led to the degeneration – and the degeneracy – of the human race, but especially of the female sex. Woman lost part of her qualities and was "undoubtedly far too much and downright pathologically sexually corrupt." Since woman does not produce, but only consumes, she becomes careless, greedy, wasteful, overestimates the external and the physical, and lures the man into it too. Anyway, the man gradually degraded, for he had bred a pure sexual being in the woman and was now so excited by it that he became a victim of his exaggerated sexual instinct. In contrast to animals, the excess of the sexual instinct is a property of man (the author has completely forgotten the decent apes). Then the author thinks of the inheritance that the girls also inherit from the father, and so on; and now a very horrible confusion begins, which I cannot go into portraying. But always in the terribly prolix discussions the leitmotif recurs: all social ills are the consequence of economic marriage. "Every single woman, born as a human being, with the urge inherited from her father for the actuation of her human faculties in her veins, and at the same time born as a woman, under the

oppressive burden of her traditional position, must undergo in her own person the same process of subjugation, suppression, abjuration of her generally human nature, for each one sounded the painful "no" which was to stifle all her urges to learn, to create, to discover, to express herself, to advance" (p. 65). "On distant prairies or in disconnected homes, where women today are still completely confined in the oppressive bonds of sex, they go mad over it by the dozens and hundreds" (p. 228). Oh! The economic dependence of women is the cause of the decline in the birth rate (p. 147). Oh! Oh! But all these abominations are to be thoroughly remedied by the American ladies. The greatest and most significant transformation the world has ever witnessed, the gradual rising of the downtrodden woman to full human equality, is now taking place (p. 126). Praise and glory of the American magnificence follows; by the woman's entering into the life of gainful employment, all becomes new, all becomes good. The human soul is purified, and the female brain is transformed. Even the poor little children come off better, because the new woman has "in the bringing forth (!), care and education of the offspring much better, finer, and more effective methods (p. 138)" than the former women, who were really only "tender guinea pigs." - The foregoing will sufficiently show how feminist scientism stands. As it is said in Faust.

*There's much more still, no less mysterious,  
I know it well, the whole book sounds just so!  
I've lost full many a year in poring o'er it,*

Quite a few reviews that I get to read are below what one can ask for. People ask themselves whether I am impolite, ungallant, an enemy of women, whether some things could not be expressed more mildly, whether individual women do not quite correspond to my description, whether I am not doing unjustified teleology, and more of that useless blabber. But they do not go into my train of thought. Women are more sparsely

endowed with intellectual abilities than men and are more likely to lose them. This state is present from the start and cannot be changed. The equalization leads to damage to society, because it affects not only the health of women, but also the quality and number of children. It can be seen that the real controversy revolves around the "a priori and immutable." Because my description applies to the average member of the present generation, a fact admitted by those who understand anyway. Now I do not deny that changes are possible through arbitrariness or in the natural course of things. The only question is how big the changes can be, whether the existing mental differences between the sexes can be changed through upbringing or in some other way only in minor matters, or also significantly. If one points to the past, i.e. towards human history, so it can be said, yes, that external circumstances were unfavorable then. Only the future will show what women can achieve, but one has to be patient. So the negotiation goes back and forth. To bring life into it, one should look for new ways. One of them seems to me to still be little used; I mean the observation of the mental differences between the sexes in the higher animals, in mammals and birds, not in bees and spiders. If it turns out that the differences that we find today in humans are also present in the upper animals, then one can assume that it is a problem that can hardly be removed, for what has been preserved through countless millennia will probably withstand modern education. Of course, it would be very difficult to collect enough material. I have tried to do so, but so far have not found anything useful, for it is astonishing how little the observers have paid attention to the mental differences between the sexes in animals (apart from the love life, of course). Good observations can be found sporadically here and there, but without larger series it will not work. Perhaps one could also make special experiments, as an American recently tried with a pair of rhesus monkeys. –

Now something more cheerful. I draw your attention to the French criticism attached to the appendix and to the letters from Sweden there<sup>48</sup>. The French wordsmith sees in me, poor man, a type of new German brutality; this is an example of the silliness political hatred can lead to. The letters from Sweden are even more fun. For half a year I have been receiving a letter from women from Sweden about every four weeks; so far there have been six. Everyone's handwriting is a little different, everyone's language mistakes are a little different, but the same thoughts keep coming back (to be said with respect), and there is a primeval rudeness everywhere. There must be nice ladies in Sweden, and I think these maenads [women who participated in the orgiastic cult of Dionysus in Greek mythology] formed a circle to bombard me with letters of abuse. Should the great evolution of our ladies lead to a similar height as the Swedes have reached, I can hide away. And yet I can't blame myself other than for speaking too gently!

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<sup>48</sup> The second part of the Appendix, *Opposing discussions*, has not been included in this translation. T/N

## Appendix

The publisher has expressed the wish to include a selection from the reviews that my essay has received as an appendix to the new edition. After some doubts, I agreed, because as *documents humains* [human documents], some effusions deserve a certain interest that they would not otherwise have, and it also seems good to me to "hang lower" some of them. The question then was which ones to select. In the earlier editions, I have completely refrained from printing approving material, but this time I want to reproduce a number of them, because I do not see why I should not do myself some credit for once<sup>49</sup>.

There are also negative medical reviews<sup>50</sup>. They come in part from proven psychiatrists, i.e. from men who should be trusted to make a reliable judgment. I'm downright shocked by the lack of understanding. In general, one finds in many educated men an impartiality towards the "woman question" which is disadvantageous for them and the cause. On closer inspection, the following explanation appears to be correct. On

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<sup>49</sup> Approving discussions can also be found (only after the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition!) e.g. in the Allg. med. Zentralzeitung (98. 1900), in the St. Petersburg med. Wochenschrift (January 1901), in the Ärztliches Vereinsblatte (January 1901), in the Deutsche med. Presse (December 12, 1901), in the Zeitschr. f. Behandl. The Imbecile and the Epileptic (Nov. 1900), in the Deutsches Lehrerhaus from July 1901, in the Reichsmedizinalanzeiger from August 30, 1901, in the Lotsen from May 24, 1902, and elsewhere.

Of course, we are only talking about approval as a whole, not about approving a thing here and there. – Incidentally, in many places there were no reviews at all; cautious husbands probably sit in editorial offices.

<sup>50</sup> *Opposing discussions*, originally part II of the Appendix, are not part of this translation. T/N

the one hand, the man has so much to do, learn, and read, that he has no time left for what is not his business and hobbies. The affairs of women appear to most to be a minor matter, the occasional discussion of which does not involve any particular reflection or reading. On the other hand, as sons, brothers, husbands, and fathers, men have all kinds of loving attitudes towards women and would like to treat them as well as possible. When it comes to discussions, the representatives of "women's rights", who usually benefit from literary knowledge and practice, and who sometimes have devoted all their thinking to this one thing, succeed in making their declamations plausible. The sense of justice drives to the protection of the oppressed, the good-natured would like to grant what is urgently desired. In addition, we doctors tend to have liberalism in our blood. In short, a lack of thorough study of the subject and a chivalrous disposition explain the error.

Most critics are literati and female fighters. The latter, as is well known, as writers, like to pretend they sport a beard, so some apparently male criticism may be female. It is now more uninhibited: freedom and equality! one hears resounding; the wild girl is fighting back. Of course, only one selection can be given here. I do not want to say anything further, the reviews may work through their own strength and beauty.

I do not approve of everything that is in the approving discussions, and I do not condemn everything in the opposing ones, nor have I picked out the best here, the worst there. Some of the discussions I did not include because they were too long. I was interested in how different things look in people's heads, and I think it will be of interest to others as well.

## Approving discussions

### a) Wissenschaftl. Beil. zur Germania of August 8, 1901.

The present treatise aroused a storm of indignation among our emancipated people and their friends, for whom it certainly contains very unpleasant things. Originally, the article was intended for medical circles only and appeared in the "Collection of informal treatises in the field of nervous and mental diseases." Only the third edition now forms an independent brochure, probably because the author tries to clear up a number of misunderstandings in a very long foreword and through new articles to facilitate understanding of what he actually wants. But it won't do him any good, he will have known that from the start – he dared to say things publicly in our time of "women's education" and "women's rights" and to justify them, which are actually not new at all, which are proven anew to everyone every day, but –. One can argue about whether the designation "idiocy of women" and, moreover – with the adjective "physiological" – is particularly well chosen, but what other expression should Möbius need for what he wanted to say! He defends himself against the designation "intellectual inferiority" because it has a contemptuous connotation, which is completely far from the author's intent. He just wanted to find a fitting expression for the "mental" weakness of women, not the sickly, but the mental weakness inherent in her being as a woman – *always naturally weaker in comparison with the mental abilities of the man* – and there was probably no other at hand. – *The intellectual talent of women, which is less than that of men*, is the subject of the author and this, in my opinion, is his fault, insofar as the treatise at least claims to be purely scientific. The woman is a human being for

herself, she not only has a different body for herself, she has different purposes, different tasks, and therefore also different qualities, spiritual and mental, than the man. It is of scientific interest to investigate the essence of women according to their spiritual and spiritual peculiarities, just as the body of women requires a separate medical examination. This research has often been an object of philosophical thought since the earliest times, but the result was consistently an unjust one, even if one does not name Schopenhauer, because the man was always used as an obvious and convenient yardstick. In this way, all treatises about women have something polemical and unscientific; they are polemic pamphlets that either vent the personal feelings and experiences of the author or are directed against a general evil, as the polemic by Möbius does. The modern women's movement already has many women on its conscience, it is making decisive progress with the support of chivalrous dreamers and is even beginning to turn the heads of women endowed with wretched brains and whom, even as men, would not be called to do anything. In due course, Möbius spoke an energetic word in his treatise, which I hope will not be entirely unsuccessful. Unfortunately, the writing too often goes beyond the scope of the objective, and it would have been better for success if Möbius had given his preference for ingenious paradoxes, which characterize his other writings so much, and taken less free rein to make hurtful and provocative statements. Such things can probably never be completely avoided as long as men study women. Unfortunately, just as in the past, the modern female intellectual elite of all nations has not given us a female philosopher who would have given us authentic information about the innermost nature of women. On the contrary, the advocates of today's women's movement seem to be regrettably mistaken about their own gender. For in spite of all the talk and reluctance and even anger, as female critics did against Möbius, the simple truth remains that women

with their physical and mental faculties are unable to exercise the scientific professions of men, and that an unnatural penetration into these professions must lead to the stunting of female qualities and purposes. The fact that at all times and also today there have been and still are a large number of intellectually excellent women and a myriad of very stupid men does not change anything – this completely indifferent fact is repeatedly communicated as shocking news. Lately the factor of heredity has been brought up with preference: women are mentally stunted by the thousands of years of oppression and deliberate stupidity, only the coming generations would produce women with equal male brains with increasing female education. The advocates of this naive view seem to want to make believe that women arise only through Parthenogenesis. Finally, it is mere shadow-boxing when it is asserted that man is the obstacle to the higher development of woman, that liberation from man must be the watchword. Oh no! The child and the mother are the obstacle and will remain so. The human race would waste away with the purposeful unsuitability of women, which inevitably follows the development of their brain, *ut figurae demonstrant*. Then the most deplorable are the nations whose women have fallen for the hoax the most.

It should not be argued that not all girls marry, and therefore only the learned professions are left for them to earn their bread and make a livelihood. Well, the girls who have to make ends meet will probably never take up the learned professions for this purpose, and it would be rewarding for women's endeavors to show them new paths and to support them. Would it not be rewarding for the modern woman to begin an energetic struggle against the humiliating class prejudices which raises the "lady" – namely the idle – so high above the worker of her sex; I don't even mean a factory worker! But then the modern woman would have to start such a struggle with herself, with her own behavior, in her own

home; start e.g. by respecting her maid, who is able and has the will to earn her own living. Times will change here too, but the women's movement will have no part in this change.

Just recently, statistics appeared – from a female pen – on the approximately 340 female students at Berlin University in the summer of 1901. The occupations of the fathers had been investigated. The ladies all came from well-off families who "actually don't need it."

It is remarkable that such an everyday experience as Möbius discusses in more detail should find so much opposition in its public discussion. Certainly it is partly due to the circumstances I just mentioned. But criticisms such as those Möbius experienced, one does not read even with the most greeted literary feuds – from a *male* pen. In the appendix, the author has published several opposing criticisms, including several female ones, probably, even if half denying it, as welcome evidence of his claim; in any case, they are a happy addition.

The content-rich treatise deserves the widest circulation because of its good cause. Men may enjoy it *cum grano salis* [with a grain of salt], as for women I only recommend it to the very clever; they will agree.

### **b) Medicine, Volume II, No. 9, 1901.**

The title of the text clearly states its content. Whether Möbius is right to describe woman as physiologically idiotic can hardly be judged better than by a medical practitioner, who as a family doctor and family adviser gets to know all those relationships that really bring the contrast between man and woman to the fore in marriage. And if he is even a spouse himself, then his own experience also speaks a word in favor of

the view of Möbius. Therefore, no general practitioner should neglect to read the brochure; it will give him instruction and clarification on many dark points on which he, as a family doctor, should seek advice.

You don't need to be a supporter or an opponent of working women to applaud Möbius' words – perhaps the former, the women's rights activists, will draw even more conclusions from the knowledge of the physiological idiocy in women: there are professions that are therefore suitable for women and that men have only illegally appropriated. For other professions it can only be said: Women begone! This also includes the profession of doctor, not because the female intellectual abilities are insufficient to learn medicine (they are sufficient for this, emphasizes Möbius), not because women are unable to acquire medical skills (they will surpass many a male doctor in this), but mainly because they are unable to fill the intellectual sphere of the medical profession. Whether the woman as a researcher could be able to achieve anything, one must rightly doubt, because in all professions that were previously open to women, they have always been surpassed by men. You don't know a female Beethoven, a female Goethe or Rubens. But even in the field of dressmaking and the kitchen, only men were authoritative.

**c) Reichs-Medicinal-Anzeiger, XXVI No. 2 of January 18, 1901.**

In this very interesting work, the well-known author proves in a most ingenious way that women are both more sparsely endowed with mental gifts than men and that they lose them much more quickly than the latter. First of all, the author emphasizes how difficult it appears to define idiocy, how there is no essential difference between stupidity and the light forms of idiocy, that there is not only a pathological but also a

physiological idiocy, and this, like the former, is approximately certain can be determined if one does not consider people but only certain types of people, of a certain age, a certain sex, etc., i.e. idiocy is a relation and idiocy can only mean: in comparison with one's peers. The author now shows how anatomically the brain of women has lagged behind in development in individual parts and convolutions, a difference from the male sex which already exists at birth. Likewise, the spiritual qualities, which are in themselves the same, are of different magnitude in the two sexes. Even if the senses are not essentially different, perhaps only stronger stimuli are required for excitement in women, the difference is very essential on the motor side, in relation to strength and skill. It will now be shown how instinct plays a greater role in women than in men, but how instinct makes women more animal-like, dependent, secure, and cheerful, and causes a lack of criticism to emerge, how their morality is only emotional morality, or unconscious right-doing, while conceptual morality remains inaccessible to them and reflection only makes them worse, whereby the vehemence of the affects and the inability of self-control become very clear. It is also demonstrated how the intellectual skills are also lower. Even if understanding and memory seem good, personal interest comes to the fore in all achievements, a really deeper interest is only present in exceptional cases. Intellectual sterility is the rule, and science is not expected to be enriched by woman. The author believes that the characteristics of women and their whole being are the easiest to grasp teleologically, and he elaborates on this more precisely, concluding that physiological nonsense in women is not just a physiological fact, but directly a physiological postulate. The author goes into the efforts of the advocates of women's emancipation, the feminists, and finally emphasizes the need for our legislation to take into account the physiological nonsense of women, and he makes both points in a most interesting and instructive way. Also in the discussion of

the second section, in which it is demonstrated that woman forfeits the spiritual gifts she has gained more quickly, the author believes that it is best to grasp the matter teleologically, and here he shows in an ingenious way how everywhere after a certain time the decay becomes clearly apparent. The higher a being stands, the later it becomes mature, and just because Nature lets man mature later than woman, it has preferred him according to the author and has shown that she wanted to go higher with him. The man's favor is even greater because he is allowed to keep his abilities almost until the end of life, whereas the precocious woman has only 30 years in which she is complete, and then the climacterium plays a final role in the woman. But the simple idiocy of the years fortunately leaves the truly good qualities of women unchanged, the maternal disposition remains and despite all simplicity an old woman can harbor a treasure trove of tenderness. Finally, the author discusses how the acquired physiological idiocy of women manifests itself, and he describes this in an absolutely clear and stimulating manner, emphasizing how it can be very difficult to distinguish the physiological from the pathological idiocy, and how one must not rely solely on clinical examination, but rather go back to the whole life story and make observations according to the circumstances of real life.

*Wulff, Oldenburg.*

*Reichs-Medicinal-Anzeiger, Leipzig, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1902.*

In Fichte's opinion, a book that can be properly appreciated immediately after printing would be unworthy of printing. This is not entirely true in the present case, as the majority of the responsible assessors agreed on the importance of the work as soon as it was published. In the two and a half years that have passed since then, this judgment has been consolidated, and

one can now safely say that with this publication the author has joined the classics of medicine from the end of the last century. The present edition appears on the book market as undemanding as the earlier ones: no information about the »9<sup>th</sup> or 20,000<sup>th</sup>« reached and no communication of any prospective Croatian or Portuguese translation. For the important thing, not fading away is the best recommendation. With regard to the content, it is sufficient to refer to the detailed discussions in No. 2 of this "Anzeigers" of January 18, 1901 (Volume 26, page 24) and in No. 18 of August 30 of the same year (ibid. p. 352). In spite of the numerous details provided, there is hardly any reason to exhibit facts here. It was only on the 68<sup>th</sup> page that the reporter noticed an inaccurate remark, namely when discussing the accommodation of women who were not provided for: "A real step forward for the better would be to resort to the monastery concept. The radical fight against monasticism was and is one of the greatest follies of the Reformation and of liberalism." So far, the Buddhist and Christian monasteries have been mostly filled with men. The associations envisaged by the author for helpful or scientific purposes under strict, uniform management cannot be regarded as monasteries – which is taken for granted by the author – if they require three monastic vows (obedience, sexual abstinence, lack of property), but not contemplative life, church service, and most importantly, an irrevocable, lifelong commitment. – But here, too, it is essentially only a question of the incorrectly used word "monastery" or perhaps a confusion with communistic endeavors, such as those for profit-making purposes in the United States of North America have been realized with great success.

As a wish for the likely numerous future editions, the publisher is recommended to equip it with a table of contents and an alphabetical index to increase its usability; it would also be desirable to date the rightly included prefaces of earlier

editions, but to avoid deleting individual citations in a book of this importance in the future. The abbreviation: M. a. W. on pages 13 and 29 will remain obscure to some readers without explanation, at least it was for this reporter.

*Helbig, Serkowitz.*

#### **d) Centralblatt für Nervenheilkunde, 1902.**

P. J. Möbius' work "*On the Physiological Idiocy of Women*" caused a sensation and found many readers. It is already in its fourth edition. It is much richer than the first two. (Report: Centralblatt 1900, p. 368). Möbius has added explanations to the new editions in which he takes a stand against his critics in his well-known frank manner and refutes some allegations with good success. He then published a number of appendices of criticisms that he received about his writing and acted very wisely. For in fact, if something is suitable to support his statements about the intellectual nature of women, it is some of these criticisms that his writing prompted (especially in the camp of the emancipated women). Read e.g. the silly and passionately hateful idioms with which a well-known head of the modern women's movement (Hedwig Dohm) thinks she is dismissing the work, and you will see and feel how right Möbius is in his fight against these emancipated women as well as the male feminists.

*Doz. Dr. Gaupp.*

#### **e) Schlesische Ärzte-Correspondenz, Volume IV, No. 15, April 28, 1901.**

The essay encourages contradictions on many points and has aroused bitterness, especially in women's circles, mainly

because in it the educational activity and abilities of women and certain emotional and character traits thanks to which the woman surpasses the man, are only mentioned in passing, without special appreciation. In the preface to the second edition, the author protests against the charge that his treatise is a pamphlet against the female sex. He does not at all deny the justification for women's emancipation, insofar as its aim is to obtain income for women in social need. But in the interest of the people's welfare and especially of the coming generation, these endeavors must not lose sight of the fact that, according to Nature's will, women have the vocation of being mothers, and the modern increase in brain activity tends to make the female brain suffer more and more severely than the male one. In his treatise the author brings together a great deal of evidence that women are inferior to men in the ability to develop their intellect. In contrast to the "feminists" he is of the conviction that neither by law nor by education will the differences between the sexes in a spiritual relation be equalized. "Nature wants motherly love and loyalty from women. Eternal wisdom does not place next to the man a man with a uterus, but the woman, to whom it gave everything necessary for her noble profession, but to whom it denied the masculine mental abilities."

The author makes a number of assertions that have not yet been proven too apodictically and is too harsh in his criticism in some places. He is e.g. too pessimistic about the mental development of women. It still remains to be seen whether the degree of physiological idiocy in women could not be reduced significantly without endangering the brain through better training in judgment and other appropriate and moderate reform of girls schooling, and whether or not through an expansion and deepening of intellectual interests the woman could prevent the previously threatening "mental myopia" and would retain her spiritual freshness longer than before.

These shortcomings are not likely to obscure the merits of the treatise. A serious and experienced doctor who is very deserving of science speaks to us, who expressly assures us (see above) that he does not want to provoke and who certainly does not like taking a particularly extreme standpoint. He sees in the "masculinization" of the female brain a calamity for the health and further development of the population, and his urgent warning gives us serious food for thought. Möbius appeals to us doctors in the interests of the human race to advise and warn here.

*Friend (Breslau).*

**f) Frankfurter Schulzeitung, Frankfurt a. M., November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1902.**

By "physiological idiocy" M., the well-known Leipzig neurologist, understands the mental inferiority of a group of people in comparison with other groups. He seeks to show that just as the female brain is smaller and simpler than the male one, the female spirit is also below the male's, and that Nature, for higher purposes, has denied the female the intellectual powers of the man. Because the child remains in great need of help for years, the difference between the sexes in man must be much greater than in the upper animals. Above all, the woman is supposed to be a mother, but it was impossible to combine vigorous brain activity and fully developed maternal skills in one individual. The mother is damaged as soon as her brain is driven to male performance.

"Confused by the parties' favor and hatred, his character fluctuates through history<sup>51</sup>" can also be said of the author whom the weaker sex, which is known to be as strong in love as

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<sup>51</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Wallenstein*, prologue. T/N

in hate, has condemned to hell: there are strong exaggerations, which M. can be guilty of in his book. But don't forget one thing – the purpose of the book, the intentions of the author. He does not want to be a misogynist and is not one. Anyone who knows M. as a cozy person and a witty, sensitive writer from personal interaction and from his numerous works will find in his content-rich reflections on the mind and the spirit of women more than a mere pamphlet against women. It is a warning from a good doctor, based on experience, to those women who, without physical or mental armament, want to throw themselves into battle with men in all areas of economic, political, and intellectual life! – Whoever studies the wicked Möbius from such points of view will not put the book down without having learned something and will particularly appreciate the fourth edition, since the female opponents of the Leipzig scholar have their say in an appendix! – This is where women become hyenas ...

*Dr. L.*

**g) Nord und Süd, February 1901, issue 287.**

The various judgments that have been made to the present work, which have been quite negative on several occasions, have prompted the author to specify his position on the subject he has dealt with in an excellent preface to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. If he initially opposes the fact that he has been called a misogynist and that his treatise is a pamphlet against the female sex, one can only agree with him. In truth, as he emphasizes, he leads "the cause of the female sex against its detractors and am fighting against anemic intellectualism, against misconceived liberalism, which amounts to a dreary egalitarianism." He rightly describes the "feminists" who want to abolish the differences between the sexes as the real misogynists. Perhaps the

expression "idiocy of women" has particularly fired up some minds and it would have been more appropriate to simply replace "idiocy" with "weakness", especially since woman is inferior to man both mentally and physically, and therefore one always speaks of the "weak" and "strong" sex. If the author complains that many have consented to him orally or in writing, but that no one has had the courage to do so publicly, then he may find a refutation of this last assumption in this paper. – Anyone who reads this publication in an impartial manner and without prejudice will not be able to refuse to agree with the author's interesting statement, which is based on a scientific basis (p. 15). "The way should remain free for real female talent, but any mass education should be discarded as useless." – If woman is to be what Nature has determined her to be, then she must not compete with man. The author is very right in asking doctors to get a clear picture of the state of the mind or brain of a woman and to do all they can to fight the unnatural aspirations of the feminists in the interest of the human race. It is a matter of the people's health, which is endangered by the perversity of the "modern woman." But what can one say when, as has happened in modern times, the obtaining of a doctoral hat on the part of a young lady is praised as a special event in the newspapers. One can only think pityingly of the many female beings who succumb to the race against the male sex as a result of anemia and extreme nervousness. The task that woman has to fulfill is strictly mapped out by Nature, and man will storm the laws of Nature in vain. It is only to be hoped that the writing which serves the purpose of enlightenment on this important social question would find the widest distribution possible.

K.

**h) Kreuz-Zeitung, Berlin, from June 25, 1901.**

If only the author had chosen a less provocative and less ambiguous title for his otherwise noteworthy brochure! Basically he doesn't want to prove anything other than that the whole mental disposition of women – we definitely subscribe to his defense of this word! [Weibes, as in *females*, not Frauen, as in *ladies*] – be different from the men's. His defense of the title did not convince us, while his factual statements contain a great deal of relevant information. Above all, note the extensive preface to the third edition, in which the author deals excellently with the modern women's movement; "the healthier a person is, the more decidedly they are man or woman" – is a word as true as it is serious for our women's rights activists. How beautifully does he characterize Rachel Levin's "genius for chatter"; How right is he that it is an impossibility to assume that a woman could fulfill the task that Nature has just divided between two sexes. We also agree with him that all the public importance that the women's movement has acquired owes it to men; "If a man takes seriously the fact that he does not want to know anything about the unconditional freedom of women, then the women's movement is over." Dr. Möbius prides himself on actually "leading the cause of the female sex against its detractors and am fighting against anemic intellectualism, against misconceived liberalism, which amounts to a dreary egalitarianism. The real enemies of women are the feminists who want to abolish the differences between the sexes." – It is a sharp but honest indignation that runs throughout the author's writing. The fact that he has reprinted the replies of some heroines of the modern women's movement in the appendix is a very clever tactic: there could be no better evidence for his statements than these effusions of doublespeak.

**i) Hallesche Zeitung, July 12, 1901.**

By "physiological idiocy" M., the well-known Leipzig neurologist, understands the mental inferiority of a group of people in comparison with other groups. He seeks to show that just as the female brain is smaller and simpler than the male one, the female spirit is also below the male's, and that Nature, for higher purposes, has denied the female the intellectual powers of the man. Because the child remains in great need of help for years, the difference between the sexes in man must be much greater than in the upper animals. Above all, the woman is supposed to be a mother, but it was impossible to combine vigorous brain activity and fully developed maternal skills in one individual. The mother is damaged as soon as her brain is driven to male performance. The author, who has often been misunderstood, has given the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of his essay a detailed foreword which is intended to provide explanations, ward off objections and clarify the meaning of the matter. This is at the heart of the "woman question," and it is worth the effort to seriously combat the modern delusions that threaten the health of the people. An anthology of opposing discussions and letters appears as an appendix. Those who are not convinced by the essay will be instructed that the author is right. If the friendly participation continues, the author will have to add some things in later editions that sound bad to the feminists.

**k) The Literary Journal of Modern Art and Literature.  
»Braunschweig«.**

If one looks at the efforts that women make today to fight for equality with men, one cannot help but feel sorry. The female sex has succeeded in pushing its way into all possible subjects over the course of time. They are allowed to attend university, are painters, sculptors, musicians (or sound artists as they say), poets. They are used for work that used to be done exclusively by men. In spite of all this, woman has not been able

to get herself the recognition she would be entitled to if she were able to do work that was to be valued equally as men's. On the contrary, for the majority of men the position of modern women does not seem justified. The fight is only getting hotter.

One must first differentiate here. A large part of the female sex absolutely does not care about what is in question here. The women belonging to this part live in a way that can only be approved, since it is so determined by Nature. When the girls have left school, they take on one job or the other, get married when the relevant years have come and, depending on the quality of the husband, spend their lives in more or less happy marriages. It is the so-called good housewives who see their ideal in fulfilling their duties and caring for the upbringing and well-being of their children. Our essay now deals mainly with the other part.

These women are mainly recruited from the more distinguished circles. They must – this goes without saying – also have something to do. Cleaning rooms, washing clothes, cooking food was not their profession – after all, they had attended a secondary school for girls and learned to play the piano – so they had to fall back onto something else. That something else was art, and soon also science. Over time, this initially harmless dabbling has evolved into the modern women's rights activism. I certainly do not want to deny that some of these women, who were hungry for emancipation, had other, nobler, more ideal motives, but they get lost in the crowd.

Although this has been going on for several decades and notable successes have not yet been achieved, women do not want to give up their position again. On the contrary, they still whistle today: "We can do what you men can, and consequently we want to do it. It is abhorrent to place ourselves in a subordinate position. Gender equality must occur in any case."

– As is well known, there is never any talk of *duties*. – If you then dare to shyly doubt their abilities, you are quickly told: “We haven’t had time to let our talents mature.” This answer, which one always gets, is absolutely incorrect. Even if it is true that women have only been active in the intellectual field for a few decades, an influence must somehow have asserted itself during this time that justified intellectual work. Also, some great individuals should have emerged out of the abundance with which women are represented. But this is hardly the case. As long as there have been female writers, literature, especially folk literature, has only declined. The trivial works of Marlitt, Heimbürg, Eschstruth, Werner<sup>52</sup>, also Viebig’s, as well as the enormous majority of daily writers are almost solely to blame for the lapse of good taste from which the people suffer today. The few really gifted talents, to which perhaps Ritter and Ebner-Eschenbach belong, do not outweigh the rest, nor would they, provided that they were ingenious natures, break their own ground (Droste-Hülshoff etc.).

In other areas it is worse rather than it is better. Where are the female composers, painters, sculptors who, through their »works«, can contribute something to the justification of the enormous apparatus that the women’s rights activists have set up to be the center of interest?

Their works of art are at best better than amateur’s, seldom average works, never more than this. They lack any imagination or ability to combine. There are also no women who are excellently active in science. If one reads their writings, one may initially be duped by the (apparently) immense knowledge, but soon notice that this knowledge is superficial. Writing so-called "works" is impossible for women; I only remember Dr. Kathe Schumacher. As a technician, as an inventor, women have

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<sup>52</sup> *The Berlin Range* by Margarethe Michaelson (aka Ernst Georgy) is another glaring example.

excelled even less. So if all the results are incapable of proving the necessity or even the usefulness of female work, if on the contrary the quintessence only brings harmful influences to light – namely overproduction, falling wages, worthless work – then it is without question necessary to reject female cooperation in the intellectual field.

Now a book has been published which tries to prove scientifically – and as I will say right away, with good results – that woman is physiologically an idiot and as a result it is quite impossible for her to create intellectually valuable things. This interesting book, written by the well-known neurologist P. J. Möbius, is published by Carl Marhold, Halle a. S., bears the much attacked title: "*On the physiological idiocy of women.*"

(An indication of the content follows.)

The book is written convincingly; one has to ignore some trivialities, almost only female critics cling to them and use them as a weapon against the author. For example, when Moebius says that it is good to keep women from being stupid, no male reader will draw such conclusions as women have done, namely that he advocates complete lack of wits. A woman can read "Hermann and Dorothea" or "Frau Sorge", so it's silly. – – –

One thing about the essay has to be praised, namely the ruthlessness with which the author proceeds, the sometimes brutal openness with which Möbius writes. Our opponents, who over time realize that they are wrong, become more and more bitter, and it is high time they were ruthlessly confronted.

Criticisms are appended to the booklet, most of which stem from female pens and are directed against the essay. These reviews are very interesting. You will notice for example how much Hedwig Dohm is hit by the thesis. Of course, she herself immediately shows how little women are capable of remaining objective and refuting clearly. She makes remarks such as: "The

beautiful, old Mr. Möbius." The last section of her criticism has the subtitle: "How do German learned gentlemen à la Möbius acquire their knowledge of womanhood?" In it, she expresses the ridiculous wish [to curse Dr. Möbius with having seven daughters], which is downright repulsive and spoils (for me at least) the whole reading of her criticism. Her counter-evidence is superficial, not very convincing; it is no refutation at all.

Hartmann.

### **I) Verlassene Wege by H. Hansjakob, Stuttgart, 1902, p. 346.**

... There are still no "brain ladies" in the area, as Dr. Möbius in Leipzig calls the learned and emancipated women.

This Dr. Möbius, an authority well known in the medical world, has written a little book which, from the standpoint of science, with regard to the emancipation of women, says the same thing that Pastor Hansjakob has often maintained from common sense, namely that it is for the whole of human society a harmful nonsense to draw women into all the functions and professions for which a male brain is required.

Dr. Möbius' little book is about "*the physiological (i.e., natural) idiocy of women.*" The learned doctor shows that the woman's brain is not made for demanding intellectual work, and shows all the damage that will result from planting a man's brain in a woman's head. He therefore pleads for the demolition of all female higher schools and recommends that girls only be taught in elementary schools.

Rightly does Dr. Möbius say that the many feminists, i.e. female heroes among today's men, put unrealistic ideas in women's heads. I have already said elsewhere what I think of these feminists.

Möbius not only scientifically proves the idiocy of women, he also speaks of other things in the sense of the Carthusian of Freiburg. He thinks that the physical and mental weakness of women is also shown by the fact that they only defend themselves with the tongue or with the pen through insults, slander, and anonymous letters. "The tongue," he writes, "is the sword of women, for their physical weakness prevents them from fighting with their fists; their mental weakness makes them forego evidence, so only the abundance of words remains."

At another point, the learned doctor and physiologist says: "Nothing is more foolish than trying to forbid women from lying. Disguises, or lies, are the natural and indispensable weapons of women, which they cannot do without."

I want to stop saying anything else; otherwise the readers might believe that I want to break the peace again. No, I just want to prove that not only ignorant and hulking people like us, but also adornments of the sciences sin in the appreciation of female achievements and qualities.

But I would like to wish Möbius' booklet to be in every "better" family and recommend it as a second Bible for reading to all women who strive for "education" and "emancipation."

Möbius does not deny that there are also exceptions, i.e. "Ladies" who are not subject to physiological idiocy. I also subscribe to that because the brilliant men must have such mothers. A man of genius will never have had a stupid goose, i.e. an idiotic woman, for his mother. Nor will this spirited mother be descended from a lady educated at a women's high school, and much less from a female academic. Such "brain ladies" can at most be and become the mothers of rabbits and chickens in human form.

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The following reply to an opponent's writing should also belong here:

**Nord und Süd, December issue, vol. 119. Bibliographical notes:**

***"On the physiological dullness of men," by Max Freimann.***

From the mere title of the book, one can immediately draw the conclusion that it is a reply to Dr. Möbius' book "*On the physiological idiocy of women.*" But anyone who believes that it is a strictly objective reply based on science will feel very disappointed. Otherwise scientific debates do not progress in such a tone as the author has liked to use in the present book. We must therefore dispense with a detailed discussion here. To characterize the whole way in which the author tries to make Möbius' essay contemptible, it should be mentioned that even the style and grammar are criticized in a downright ridiculous manner, and this is what an author writes who, e.g., on page 15 constructed a sentence that is, believe it or not, 22 lines long.

If in the first part the author attacks Dr. M. and other doctors in an intemperate manner, in the second part he indulges in all kinds of vituperation and disparagement of the male sex.

The saying: "le ton fait la musique" [lit. the tone makes the music, i.e. it is not what you say, it is the way you say it] proves itself here in all its truth. But thank you for such music.

K.

### III

#### Excerpts from letters from colleagues and others

##### a)

Thank you very much for kindly sending me the seventh edition of "*Idiocy*." I am really pleased with your great success and am convinced that this book will do incalculable good. The longer I observe the activities of female students in my laboratory, the more I have to agree with you. The female brain is not at all made for scientific effort. The girls all get sick. I see blooming robust girls coming into my laboratory. And at the end of the semester they are all anemic, nervous, and complaining of headaches. As long as they are still healthy, smart girls should become mothers of smart, healthy sons, but should not first ruin their health by doing work for which they are not made, and then give birth to crippled children! If one were to require of girls as strict a baccalaureate examination as one does of young men, especially in mathematics, one would keep almost all of them away from university. In my laboratory not a single one was able to calculate with logarithms. I have never been able to discover a trace of clear physical concepts in the exams. – Even more mischief is caused by women's work in the lower classes of the population. Women's work in the factories should be forbidden by law, at least the work of women who still have children under five years of age. The mother should remain with her child. No power in the world can replace the mother for the child. The minimum wage for men should be set by international legislation at such a level that the woman does not have to go out to work and can stay with the children. Otherwise the noblest races of the human race will perish in a few generations.

##### b)

I have just finished reading the third edition of "*On the Physiological Idiocy of Women*." I need not tell you that as a gynecologist I naturally agree with you on all essential points. I was all the more outraged that you should disgrace your book in the appendix by reproducing such inferior criticisms; if they were ingenious replies, the value of your book would be increased, but such idiotic (this time pathological) outpourings as those of Baccalaureus should not be printed. This is street excrement and belongs there.

I address – and this is the purpose of the letter – as I believe in the name of many, the request to you to drop these criticisms in further editions. At most, the critiques of the various women would be included because they are so amusing and, above all, so beautifully reflect the nature of woman as characterized by you.

c)

Perhaps one day I will come to publicly acknowledge you, although my literary activity is moving in a different direction.

These lines are now prompted by two things. First, I would like to take the liberty of pointing out to you a lengthy omission by Nietzsche (*Beyond Good and Evil* § 234 ff.) which may have escaped your attention. He says there among other things (§ 241): "In the basic problem of "man and woman" perhaps to dream of equal rights, equal education, equal claims and obligations, all this is a typical sign of 'flat-headedness' etc..." This is written from my soul: I have an innate aversion to the "Mulier in ecclesia"<sup>53</sup> and that the man represents a higher

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<sup>53</sup> Mulier (taceat) in ecclesia – Let the woman (be silent) in church. From 1 Corinthians 14:34: "Women are to be silent in the churches."

variety of Homo sapiens L. than the woman is, as you yourself point out, long since proven by History. But it is, I fear, useless to oppose the women's movement. This is made possible less by the urge of women than by the feminization of men. Here lies the great danger and this alarming process can only come to a halt with the abrupt interruption of the whole present development by wars, epidemics or other natural events.

I was filled with special satisfaction with two views you present in your preface. You, too, do not regard the human soul as a kneadable mass which can be given any shape; to you, too, the soul seems to be rather a sum of given forces which cannot be changed much by education and admonition. Likewise, you also seem to regard the much overestimated "milieu" with suspicious looks. As if the environment were a force, a creative force capable of reshaping characters.

d)

I know your writing "*On the Physiological Idiocy of Women*" from the first edition already. I basically agree with you; only I think that in the "steadfastness" of your conclusions you are going too far. Nevertheless, I feel that overall you never want to do wrong, but always seek the truth. In the preface to the third edition, you have mostly explained your point of view happily, although you have not been unclear for unprejudiced readers in the first edition either. You have done the matter itself a great service by printing the "Criticism and Letters."

e)

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Also, 1 Timothy 2:12: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." T/N

I take the liberty of sending you Enclosed the letter of a "clever and beautiful" woman as a reaction to your writing about the physiological idiocy of women. I enjoyed the letter very much and I hope the same from you, in my opinion it is a proof of the correctness of your views, to which I completely agree. I consider the modern endeavors about the woman question to be a misfortune for the female sex and am glad that in recent times the press has also dared to call attention to the dangers. On the male side, much more would be done against these mostly nonsensical endeavors if too many men – including some in the most influential positions – were not under the whip.

f)

I have read with great interest your writing about the physiological idiocy of women and I agree, even if that may be of no further importance to you, essentially with your explanations. The practical physician also has enough opportunity, if he only knows how to observe, to get to know the woman in her various situations, circumstances and ages: I have found much confirmed in your writing and have therefore read it with great pleasure; by pleasure, however, I understand the joy in the revelation of truths, i.e. in the truth itself, especially when one sees it confirmed from a competent side.

When considering that it is generally impossible for women to create or break ground independently, I remembered that I pointed out earlier that the *ars obstetricia* in ancient times, despite theoretical treatments by Hippocrates, Celsus, or Galen, was only in the hands of women, so, in practice, they had no competitor in the man, yet with time brought this art down to such an extent that a male intervention later became an absolute necessity.

**g)**

The general public could be given convincing lessons in female psychology in front of clothing, jewelry and photography shops' windows. A museum of women's hats, corsets, and *culs de Paris*<sup>54</sup> would also serve the same purpose.

It finally hit the ground; as the mad raving of the women's criticisms against your treatise prove. According to my conviction and experience, the whole emancipation thing is overestimated in its general importance. The majority does not think about it and will never think about it. But just open all the barriers as much as possible, the faster the proud horse will turn back.

It is interesting how the most furious among your opponents comes out with the devastating conception of a sentiment – merely for the sake of its ultimate goal – which until now has been generally regarded as the woman's highest adornment, pride and glory: "The sanctification of motherhood is one of the conventional lies." (Zukunft of April 5, 1902, p. 26!) I have never thought otherwise of the nature of child-love, but have least of all expected approval from a woman, a mother.

**h.**

My grateful approval of your "*Physiological Idiocy of Women*" comes to you somewhat late, but it is no less sincerely meant because of that. Whether you care much to receive a

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<sup>54</sup> Lit. *Parisian asses*: buttocks pad or hoop frame worn under the dress at times during the 18th and 19th centuries. T/N

testimony of veneration from a pastor, I do not know; but I must write to you. You have given me too much pleasure!

I have known your writing only since late last fall. At a pastoral conference we were talking about the position of women according to Paul. There, people were at loggerheads. The chairman, who has an obnoxious congress-goer of a wife, was in a rage, and a younger officiant talked about Möbius. I immediately bought the book, read it several times with great pleasure and can hardly part with it.

When I was 20 years old, I read Stuart Mill and Bebel<sup>55</sup>; at that age one is receptive to such things. But inwardly I could not adopt those thoughts, which were refuted by facts at every hour of my life. I was also never able to bother myself further with feminist literature, and skipped over all these things in newspapers and magazines. But why, I know now only after I have found in your writing the expression of the truth that is always in my feelings and in my head.

What you say is actually known to everyone from time immemorial, and it is sad that it must now be said and proven as something new.

In the Basel weekly "Samstag" I tried to prove how far you are right and wrong at the same time in the linguistic question concerning the designation of *women* [Weiber]. We are dealing with a linguistic phenomenon that linguistics has known for a long time and calls pejoration or deterioration of meaning. The "unpleasant aftertaste" that you find with the word is nothing else than the beginning of a pejoration. Now, it is important to note here that in all languages the designations for woman have always been easily subjected to pejoration, sometimes on the

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<sup>55</sup> John Stuart Mill (20 May 1806 – 7 May 1873), author of the early feminist work *The Subjection of Women*. August Bebel (22 February 1840 – 13 August 1913), author of *Woman and Socialism*.

side of immorality (e.g. prostitutes and wenches, French *garce* and *fille*, English *quean*), sometimes on the side of social degradation (*maiden = maid*), sometimes simply in the sense of inferiority (*femme, woman*). Instead of denying that the word *Woman* is beginning to become useless as a genus designation, you could have successfully pointed out how language proves that people have always known what your writing says.

I am pleased about your writing also because of the form. It is fair to say that out of ten German scholars, nine are on tense terms with German linguistics and good taste. For once, you are someone who can also say what he knows. It is a relief to read something like that.

I am surprised to hear that Forel<sup>56</sup> takes a stand against you in his new book. I don't know what to make of it, although I know from the past that the clever woman has always been Forel's quirk.

Please accept, dear Doctor, the assurance of my most excellent and grateful esteem.

Postscript: My dear wife is completely of your opinion, and since then she is twice as dear to me.

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<sup>56</sup> Auguste-Henri Forel (1<sup>st</sup> September 1848 – 27 July 1931).

# **SEX AND IMMODESTY**

A Commentary on Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character*

**Paul Julius Möbius**

This time, it is not an important matter, but a bold youth, the young Otto Weininger, recently became a doctor of philosophy.

On June 26<sup>th</sup> I received a thick book for discussion with the following title:

*Sex and character* by Dr. Otto Weininger, Vienna and Leipzig, 1903, W. Braumüller, Gr. 8º, XXIII and 599 pp. (8 m.)

I read it and had a very unpleasant sensation, as if I were looking into a mirror and seeing my own image distorted into something shapeless. The author presented roughly what I have said, but with unbearable exaggerations and all sorts of unpleasant additions. The impression that this caricature of my notions made on me was not improved by the fact that the author spoke naively of me. I wrote to Vienna to inquire about the unknown author, and received the answer that Weininger was a 24-25-year-old boy who gave rise to the highest hopes. In my review, which I published in *Schmidt's Yearbook of the Entire Medicine* (August issue), I pulled Weininger's ears a little, but I was not that harsh. So that one can see that it actually went off graciously, our discussion is reprinted.

"It's hard to speak fairly about W's book. Most will put it down with reluctance and cannot be blamed for it. However, it has many advantages. Even if the author has not overcome in himself what he would like to overcome, if he lacks *Sophrosyne* [ideal of excellence of character and soundness of mind] here, positive knowledge there, or at least insight into the difficulty of the matter, we still find in him a highly gifted man who has read a lot, tries to think sharply and, although he must be very young, has gained a lot of experience. Even if his passion for playing with concepts does not make him shy away from eccentricity and ultimately leads to all kinds of errors, it is still

gratifying that he energetically pushes for a thoughtful summary.

Now for the unfavorable side of it. Most of the thoughts about the peculiarities of the sexes that the author puts forward are already in my writings; the title itself is also taken from that of a series I came up with. The difference is firstly that I have communicated my points in an undemanding form, often as if conversationally, while the author always speaks grandiosely and puts a philosophical cloak on things; and secondly, that the author exaggerates and distorts his thoughts and theoretical speculations on love. None of that would be bad per se. One cannot ask a young man to have all his own thoughts, and if he expresses these thoughts systematically, it is also a merit. But when a writer denigrates his predecessor just to avoid appearing as a plagiarist, the fun stops and the crime begins. On p. 344, the author protests against the confusion of his "standpoint" with the "homely" views of P. J. Möbius. His arrogance worsens when he declares that my assertion according to which talented women are a sign of degeneration is erroneous, that intermediate sexual forms are entirely normal. So the man in the philosopher's coat wants to determine what is normal and what is pathological!

The author calls his work "An Investigation of Fundamental Principles." He should say, one that takes everything to extremes. Whoever allows himself to be supervised by experience knows that the more we get into width and depth, the more gloomy and uncertain everything becomes. Deductive reasoning helps where life experience is lacking. Such reasoning helps when we know nothing for certain from experience; the latter knows no respite, it knows everything and judges like a god.

The author's principle is that the absolute man (M) stands opposite the absolute woman (W), but that real people are M

with an alternating admixture of W, or W with some M. This makes things much easier for himself, because if something is wrong with the experience, he can say, yes, that is due to the admixture of M or W. The result is that W has no soul, that she lacks character. Memory, thinking, imagination, genius, ethics are completely absent; her whole being is sexuality and her real activity is matchmaking. A 'me' in the true sense of the word, genius, logic, ethics, aesthetics, all of this belongs to M alone. The matter acquires a very peculiar coloring through the involvement of Kant's "ethics." Moral is only acting out of maxims, so motherly love is not moral, etc. Kantianism also allows the author to end with an absurdity. Because in coitus the person is not regarded as an end, but only as a means, complete abstinence alone is moral, and a woman can only be helped by no longer being regarded as a woman.

The reason why W's book is so thick is that the author wanted to get rid of all his thoughts altogether. We get to hear long lectures about genius, logic, etc., some good things (e.g. about the wretchedness of modern psychology), a lot of harshness. Perhaps the author is once again worried about his likeness to God.

The punishment of fate was not long in coming. I received a long, somewhat informal letter from W's, written in Syracuse on August 17<sup>th</sup>. The writer is very much indignant; I would have accused him of plagiarism, of hypocritical, thievish behavior, and of slandering others; I must either prove what I said or publicly revoke it. He, W., will give me three weeks, then he will accuse me of malicious slander and force me to sue him in court.

Of course I did not reply to this letter. Apart from other reasons, I do not feel like having personal contact with W. However, after considering the matter more closely, I came to the opinion that it would be quite good to take on the "thrown

glove" (as W. puts it). Because it is important to me to explain to a wider circle than that of my peers how I think about W's book. I would be embarrassed if it were ever to be said: "Möbius and Weininger say ...". That is why I want to get to business and discuss W's book as thoroughly as it is not possible in a magazine. It will be possible to make some factual remarks so that the denying spirit does not have to speak alone.

Once I have said what I want to say, then I am through with W. He can then have whatever he wants printed. I won't sue him. Yes, if it were [a matter of stolen] silver spoons – but when it comes to writing I do not need the courts, I can deal with my opponents on my own.

W. thinks I called him a plagiarist. What have I become?! That would be impolite, even an insult. No, I don't do that. The wording is also very clear, and only because W. has been abandoned for a moment by his usual acumen could he come by those unhappy thoughts. I said he thought people might think he was a plagiarist, and that was why he talked about me in a derogatory and improper manner. It must have been like that. My essay on the physiological idiocy of women appeared in the spring of 1900. It caused quite a stir and, as W. writes in his letter, was in all hands. W. was about 22 years old at the time. You have to be careful with his astonishing precociousness, but it is likely that it was still in the making at the time, that its philosophical structure had not yet been built. He will have read the booklet, participated in the conversations about it and then said to himself: "I shall once show how one has to do it, how one has to deal with the problem in a truly philosophical spirit." When he then immersed himself in it, he came to the same conclusions as I did, as far as the factual is concerned, and about that he himself could not be in doubt, even though he knew that he far surpassed me in depth and ingenuity. It was uncomfortable for him, because such a young

man doesn't want to owe anything to others, he wants to be original on his own. Someone could come and say: "Aha, there is also someone who writes about the physiological idiocy of women" or "you are basically claiming what Möbius said." So he would have appeared as the successor of a man who has made himself so common that he writes in an understandable way to everyone who has probably not received the higher philosophical ordinations. He wanted to prevent this, and so he protested against the community with my homely views. Even if it never occurred to me to call W. a plagiarist, I did call his title an imitation. He now writes that his title was chosen at the beginning of 1902. Of course it is when he wrote it. He adds, however, that before the publication of his book he saw my work "Sex and Degeneration." "Sex and -" is written five times on the cover of this booklet. If someone sees this series of my titles and then also chooses "Sex and -", it shows a lack of delicacy.

But I have said that the main thoughts about the differences between the sexes are already in my works.

Of course, I don't go about claiming that I have discovered brand new truths. The mental differences between the sexes have been discussed so often since time immemorial that everything has been said in detail that can be said at all. However, if one goes through the most important utterances preserved in the literature, one can see that they are almost always *aperçus* [insights], aphorisms, and rarely connected trains of thought. With the Indians, in the Old Testament, with the Greek poets, in Plato and Aristotle, with the Romans, with the church writers, everywhere I find a multitude of sayings about women, but nowhere a systematic discussion. The subject has only been dealt with in more detail since the Renaissance. I have quoted some older writings that are supposed to show the virtues of women in "*idiocy*." But books

against women have also appeared. I have read one that deals with the wickedness of women and is written in French. There are all kinds of assertions and historical statements as evidence; in any case, such statements do not meet our requirements. But there is comparatively little to be found among the newer ones. There are the older moralists and the poets, the philosophers and the (in a broad sense) anthropological writers. I haven't read everything, but I think I've got to know the most important things. From the outset, one expects flashes of inspiration from the poets and moralists rather than exhaustive discussions. Most can be learned from Shakespeare and Goethe, one merely has to collect the details. In the essay on Goethe and the sexes I tried to give a picture of Goethe's view; but something coherent does not come out. Among philosophers, Kant is rich in good comments (especially in anthropology), but he remains quite fragmentary. Schopenhauer has more to offer, but he also leaves many gaps. E. von Hartmann completed some of his remarks, and this philosopher also devoted meritorious arguments to the "woman question" in the narrower sense. We owe Nietzsche quite excellent but incoherent remarks. All of the above, from Shakespeare to Nietzsche, agree on the main points, a result that must be recognized. But others are standing opposite them, balancing the scale. These are mostly people who have taken their starting point from political or social views and want to eliminate the natural differences between the sexes because of their ideas of freedom or justice. The books by Mill and von Bebel<sup>57</sup> have become most important; it is enough to name them, since they cannot be considered as sources. Until recently, the representatives of science have achieved very little. A short but good discussion of the feminine nature

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<sup>57</sup> See footnote 54. T/N

can be found in Ploss & Bartels<sup>58</sup>. Ellis' book on man and woman<sup>59</sup> is a very diligent and welcome compilation, but extremely weak on the side of thoughts. As I have said earlier, the best seems to me to be the essay by Lombroso-Ferrero. I am of course disregarding the many papers that deal with individual questions.

If I wanted to ascribe a merit to all of these predecessors, it could only be that of having given a treatment "on principles" for the first time. I have not pointed out individual defects or faults in women, but have shown that in all areas, with the exception of one, a woman's brain performance is considerably less than that of a man. I justified this with the fact that woman is entirely a sexual being, and I have chosen the teleological principle as my guide. Woman's purpose is to bear children and to care for those children who are in need of care longer than any animal cubs. Only as a mother does the woman take precedence over the man; the organ of love for children is more strongly developed in her, so that she can be more to the children than the man, and to the weak and those in need of help in general. I drew practical conclusions from these lists more decisively than my predecessors. I also consider new the proof of the acquired physiological idiocy added to the

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<sup>58</sup> Hermann Heinrich Ploss (1819 – 1885) wrote a book, *Woman in Natural History and Folklore*, edited by Maximilian "Max" Carl August Bartels (1843 – 1904). T/N

<sup>59</sup> Henry Havelock Ellis (1859 –1939) was an English physician, eugenicist, writer, progressive intellectual and social reformer who studied human sexuality. He co-wrote the first medical textbook in English on homosexuality in 1897, and also published works on a variety of sexual practices and inclinations, as well as on transgender psychology. Ellis was among the pioneering investigators of psychedelic drugs and the author of one of the first written reports to the public about an experience with mescaline, which he conducted on himself in 1896. He wrote, among others, *Man and Woman: A Study of Secondary and Tertiary Sexual Characteristics* (1894). T/N

congenital one, also the demonstration that the talents of girls are male secondary sexual characteristics, i.e. that the unusually gifted girls are a mixture of the female and the male.

In my footsteps, W. has now come up with his "Investigation of Fundamental Principles." The complete lack of modesty which is characteristic of the young man is expressed very well in the voluntary disclosure which he wrote for the journal "Zukunft" (of August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1903). "I believe that in this book I have solved the psychological problem of the law of the sexes and have given a final answer to the so-called woman question." He has carried out "a completely phrase-pure exploration into the nature of women, carried to the very end of human knowledge, and the raising of the issue to a level the previous discussions have not reached." Damn! What is useful in W's book has already been said by me, and that which he has added is nonsense, to put it mildly, weakly justified, and merely stated.

W's book is divided into two parts. The first, as he puts it, is "biological-psychological." The "biological" part comes from books, of course. But it must be admitted that W. read diligently and that he cleverly garnished the matter with the fruits of his reading, that the presentation, as merchants put it, is good. The young man writes to me that as a doctor I have too little biological knowledge, but he can safely accept my praise, because I have taken care of things a little bit. I have now carefully looked for what might be new in this first part, but I have found nothing. It shouldn't be a reproach. The questions that come into consideration have been discussed many times, and those who join it only have to choose between the views expressed. W. agrees with the views that I too believed to be correct. An important question is where is sexuality located? W.

replies in connection with Steenstrup<sup>60</sup> (1840): in the whole body. I said (*About the Somatic Sex, a review*, January 1903): every cell is sexually stamped. W. says: "every cell is sexually characterized" (p. 16). W. did not copy me (which in this case already seems to be evident from the data), but it is a happy conjunction. That doesn't mean much to me, but his luck has brought W. together with Schopenhauer. W. believes to have discovered the natural law according to which the sexes attract one another. His knowledge led him "to the discovery of an unknown law of Nature that was merely suspected by a philosopher" (p. 32). Next, he presents Schopenhauer's well-known views. Later, what he says becomes more questionable, because in the comments (p. 488) he says that the passages of Schopenhauer were unknown to him when he wrote his text, "as closely as my presentation specifically touches Schopenhauer's factually, even sometimes literally." This story is typical. Schopenhauer's chapters on sexual love are the first things a young man usually gets to know from the philosopher, and of course W. knew them too, for how else would he have come to speak of a premonition of a philosopher? But when he wrote, he took the thoughts that were memories for his own inspirations. Memory, which, according to W., is extremely faithful in the genius, left him in a lurch. Whoever is subject once to such delusions of memory, it will happen to him more often, and so some things are explained. The same thing happened to W. with his leitmotif, the "Principle of intermediate sexual forms." Apart from the exaggerations to be discussed later, W. does not propose anything new. The expression 'intermediate sexual forms' has long been in use, and that the spiritual deviations of the masculine women and the effeminate men belong to them, I discussed this briefly earlier in the treatise *Sex and Degeneration* in detail. W. does

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<sup>60</sup> Johannes Japetus Smith Steenstrup (1813 – 1897) was a Danish zoologist, biologist, and professor. T/N

not mention this paper. In the letter to me he says that he knew about it. Now, either he had read it and then should have pointed out its content, at least in a footnote, or he had not read it, and then had not informed himself as well as he should have. In the chapter "the emancipated women" W. explains that the need for emancipation exists only in women of masculine nature, and that the so-called famous women have become famous because of the masculine aspect in them. I have not contented myself with assertions, but have substantiated my statements by discussing the individual persons, and especially by examining the heredity. I remind you of my essay on female mathematicians, the explanations in "*Stachyology*" [science of progeny] and in "*Art and Artists.*" But I have also pointed out that the relationships are different in the various arts, that mathematics and the visual arts, for example, are entirely masculine, while in poetry the woman (i.e. the woman in principle, W) has her share. Had W. paid attention to this, he might have been less dismissive. In practical terms, we meet again. I had said that nothing should be put in the way of women who have "some of the secondary male sexual characteristics, i.e. certain talents and the urge for freedom," but rather that they should have their way made easier. W. says (p. 87): "Free admission to everything, no obstacle in the way of those whose true psychological needs drive them ... towards male occupations." But the "women's movement" is harmful because many are driven by fashion, persuasion, etc. to run along with it and be harmed in its path. I said so. "But away with party-building, away with untrue revolutionizing, away with the entire women's movement," says W. The first part of the book contains a chapter on "Homosexuality and Pederasty." W. himself will probably not believe that he said anything new in it. Incidentally, he agrees with the correct view, to which I have also subscribed, that same-sex sexual feelings are always based on an innate predisposition. Finally, the fifth chapter represents

a kind of transition to the second part. W. emphasizes in it, as I have done, that psychology should proceed from knowledge of the individual character, that the "characterology" must correspond to the morphology (he names me), that the physiognomics, which we all involuntarily practice, is in itself justified (see my article on degeneration).

The second part of the book is entitled: "the sexual types," i.e. the characters of the male principle and the female principle shall now be described. But while the first part is relatively sober and orderly, in the second part W. gives in to his need to speak without hesitation. We must hear everything that occurred to him during his college years, and the explanations on the subject at hand are hidden under a rampant mass of "philosophical" thoughts. It turns out that the female principle is exclusively sex, that woman has negative qualities in all other relationships. She lacks the consciousness of a man, she does not live in concepts as well as in feelings, she lacks memory and imagination, her actions are instinctual, she has no relation to the concept of morality, in particular she has a curious stance concerning the truth. That is the justified core of W's remarks, and it is actually exactly what I have described under the designation of physiological dementia. But of course the picture I sketched out is distorted by dreadful superimpositions, and W's intemperance has produced a caricature that is terrifying.

Because of that, I will now take the trouble to sort out W's work and examine its value.

But before I take a closer look at the philosopher W., for the sake of factual interest, I want to go into the question of the abnormality of the sexual intermediate stages. W. claims flatly that they are a normal phenomenon, and he imagines that he has provided evidence of this through a few quotes. We are concerned with some facts from natural history which are well known, namely, that in some plants there is a mixture of the

sexes, that now and then an animal shows some characteristics of the opposite sex, that female characteristics can be passed on through the son to his own daughter. It is of course quite ridiculous to try to show in such a way that hermaphroditism in man is a normal phenomenon. A number of stages lead from the normal person to the pronounced hermaphrodite; the more normal the person, the more distinctly they are man or woman; the closer they are to the hermaphrodite, the more abnormal they are. All experts have long since recognized that this applies to the physical; that the apparently purely mental deviations from the sexual type are also pathological phenomena; that is precisely the progress made. If you can think clearly, you don't really need any proof. Whoever needs proof will find it in the fact that each deviation, even the slightest one, from the sexual type reduces fertility, that in each case other pathological conditions are to be proven, that the course of heredity shows the connection between the abnormal sexual character and other disorders. The matter is discussed in more detail in *Sex and Degeneration*. It actually goes without saying that only someone who knows the deviations can judge whether they belong to the normal, i.e. the pathologist. But as soon as general terms come into question, people seem to have dispensed with expertise. The other day a newspaper editor who reviewed me said that he also knew what degeneracy was. No, journalists and philosophers have no say in the matter. It is regrettable that the endeavors of some so-called homosexuals to consider themselves normal always create new confusions. They think something is true because they want it to be. Your distressed state excuses the wish, but nothing changes the facts.

I believe that in *Sex and Degeneration* I have shown how far the principle of the intermediate stages extends, at least I have indicated what can be made of it. But one shouldn't overlook the fact that it is only of limited use. This is easily

understandable when one realizes that the intermediate realm belongs to pathology. Through the principle the terrain is, so to speak, cleared, i.e. the forms are eliminated which, through degeneracy, have become impure representatives of a sexual type and which can therefore lead to errors. A preparatory work is therefore done through the principle, for the eye can see clearly only when the intermediate forms have been eliminated. Experience shows that the intermediate forms become rarer the closer they are to the middle between the two sexes. Hermaphroditism is to be regarded as the center. It is extremely rare. Somewhat more common is so-called pseudo-hermaphroditism. This is followed by hypospadias, gynecomastia, etc., etc. All states which are still considered curiosities. The effeminate men and the masculine women are relatively common, the deviation of which is mainly evident in the mental realm, while only slight indications of the opposite sex can be perceived on the body. But they, too, form only a small fraction of the people. Attempts at estimating have only been made in the case of people with wrong gender feelings: In our degenerate population one can count about one in a thousand. Even greater is the number of people who are considered quite normal and in whom only careful examination can prove individual characters of the opposite sex. Of course nothing can be said about their number. You gradually lose yourself in the almost normal mass. But even if the boundaries of the intermediate realm are set wide, the intermediate forms always remain exceptions. Because of W's exaggerations, who considers the intermediate forms to be normal, the conception becomes crooked from the start. It's just as if someone wanted to say: None of the people I know are completely healthy, so the disease is actually normal. If in fact the intermediate forms were a reality and the sexual types only the imaginary ends of the series, the hermaphrodite would be the most real creature. But it is not; it is only the extreme of a pathological deviation.

Around him are grouped the weaker degrees of deviation from the right type, but all together form a variation that is to real people what white mice are to the gray ones. The ideal is not the absolute man, the absolute woman, of which one would have nothing in common at all with the other, but the absolute human, who is split into the two sexes for reasons of expediency. The basis of human nature is common to both sexes, it is not differences in principle that separate them, but their difference is quantitative. The Demiurge had, so to speak, already formed a model for living beings when he realized that he would achieve more with a double form. Now he let men and women go out, and depending on the task of the species, he let the two be different. In humans it proved to be useful to develop the simple archetype, with the man substantially further, in particular to equip his brain very richly, while with the woman only some suitable improvements were to be made.

If the principle of the intermediate forms has done its job, if the hermaphroditic formations have been eliminated, at least with the exception of small remnants, then we keep the real humanity, and it breaks down into real men and real women. Because we have recognized all of them as pathological when looking at the intermediate forms, we benefit from the following sentence: the healthier a person is, the more determinedly they are man or woman.

That principle cannot help in recognizing the differences between the sexes. No principle at all helps here, only experience.

On the other hand, another principle really helps to understand the difference and to continue the investigation, namely the teleological principle. It just has to be properly understood. The teleological principle, to talk in a scholastic manner, is a heuristic method; its application consists in asking how things should have been if this or that purpose had been

pursued. The principle does not claim that an end has been pursued, but only says: if this was intended, that is to be expected. Every unselfconscious person applies this principle, and even those who are zealously against it *in abstracto* cannot do without it *in concreto*. Even when considering the differences between the sexes, it is in fact indispensable.

I am unable to name any other principles. Open your eyes and find your way into the situation through teleological considerations, that's all. This path leads me to modest results, but at least it does not lead to '*La La Land*'.

So now to the philosopher W.! To put it briefly, he is an unhappy fellow, quite a second class priest, as Dühring<sup>61</sup> puts it, and a scholastic through and through. He believes he has come to objective knowledge by generalizing without regard to experience and declaring what is conditionally valid to be unconditionally valid. Where it says "some", he puts "all", where it says "less", he says "nothing." Scholasticism consists in the belief that one experiences something by handling concepts. It is comfortable and good for human arrogance. The less real knowledge one has, the greater the inclination towards scholasticism, and therefore young cultures and young people always tend towards it. If a man is young and has a tendency to arrogance, scholasticism will strongly lure him. In the course of time he becomes more and more certain in his judgment, and then he judges with the same certainty about what one can know and about what one cannot know. The shameful of thinking consists in answering difficult questions with delicate shyness, in asserting too little rather than too much, and in emphasizing, to the extent that the possibility of experience diminishes, that our judgments are only conjectures. W. once

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<sup>61</sup> Eugen Karl Dühring (1833 – 1921) was a German philosopher, positivist, economist, and socialist who was a strong critic of Marxism.  
T/N

said, very correctly, as Lessing did, that one always speaks most of the virtues one does not have. Very often he speaks of modesty. For example, he declares every so often that pity is no good, it is not shameful, because it does not respect the other's suffering. Should W., by the way, ever fall into the water and be pulled out by a philanthropic rescuer, then he should think of Nietzsche's quirk: If the other had respected his suffering, he could no longer do so. So what W. is missing is precisely the modesty of thinking. I don't want to offend the young man, and I like to believe that otherwise he is the most shameful person, but the judgments in his book are shameless. It would not matter very much if the reputation of philosophy did not suffer. Unfortunately, shamelessness is an old evil of the philosophers. It was incredibly great among the so-called post-Kantian philosophers, and what was the effect? The insolent disparagement of these people made philosophy contemptible, so that no decent person wanted anything more to do with it, so that the very name philosopher spoiled the taste of serious people. The disgust at the day in day out talking of the alleged philosophers meant that the real philosophers were not heard, even despised, and that, on the other hand, the scholars abandoned any philosophical education and spoke in a convoluted manner as soon as general questions had to be answered. The shamelessness of the supposed philosophers is to blame for the fact that the great Fechner<sup>62</sup> had to spend his life unnoticed, while wreaths on common foreheads were desecrated for his fame. (It is to my honor that he speaks of

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<sup>62</sup> Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801 – 1887) was a German experimental psychologist, philosopher, and physicist. An early pioneer in experimental psychology and founder of psychophysics, he inspired many 20th-century scientists and philosophers. He is also credited with demonstrating the non-linear relationship between psychological sensation and the physical intensity of a stimulus which became known as the Weber–Fechner law. T/N

Fechner with admiration, but I can assure him that if Fechner were still alive, he would reject him far away.) W. did not experience the bad times. I was a doctor of philosophy when he was not even born, I experienced the enthusiasm for Büchner<sup>63</sup>, for Strauss, for Dubois-Reymond<sup>64</sup>, etc., I have slowly seen the interest in philosophical matters reawaken, and I hope that now a better time will come. But there is still great ignorance and suspicion everywhere. If people now read W's book, they think: So this is what the philosophers look like, and they turn in horror. That's why I say: No, this is not what the real philosophers look like, this is what the mock-philosophers look like. I have also named W. a second class priest. By this I do not mean that he advocates any religion, but that his teaching is basically a right doctrine of the priests. He has taken truth and morality as his own. Read p. 207 and see whether or not this enthusiasm for Kantian idioms does not speak of genuine clerical pride. He is comfortable with Kant's rigorism because he feels himself to be a pure man of duty, an incomparable splendid fellow. He found what suits him from Kant: self-awakening, the intelligible I, absolute freedom, etc., and he hits us with this old nonsense countless times. Actually, Kantianism does not suit W. He looks like a young man in a modern English suit with a braid and buckled shoes. How is it that he just fell in love with the Kantian scholasticism? I will tell him in confidence. He would like to be different from what he is, and that is why he has just reached for what is most alien to him and dressed up in it.

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<sup>63</sup> Possibly Adolf Emil Büchner (1826 – 1908), a German conductor and Kapellmeister. He wrote a number of compositions, including operas, chamber music, choral works, and symphonies. T/N

<sup>64</sup> Possibly Emil Heinrich du Bois-Reymond (1818 –1896), a German physician and physiologist, the co-discoverer of nerve action potential, and the developer of experimental electrophysiology. T/N

After this general introduction let us see what the philosophical youth made of the doctrine of the sex differences. So that the reader can taste a sample, I want to show him how W. speaks. He designs a two-column table of life: on the left are properties that belong to all living beings – individuation, recognition, lust, sex drive, narrowness of consciousness, drive; on the right are properties that belong to the man alone – individuality, memory, worth, love, attention, will (p. 378). In the properties on the right one can recognize the idea of eternal life. "Just as all earthly life is sustained by earthly food, this other life requires spiritual sustenance (symbol of the Lord's Supper)." These words are on p. 379! Then he continues (p. 380): "As the absolute female has no trace of individuality and will, no sense of worth or of love, she can have no part in the higher, transcendental life. The intelligible, hyper-empirical existence of the male transcends matter, space, and time. He is certainly mortal, but he is immortal as well. And so he has the power to choose between the two, between the life which is lost with death and the life to which death is only a stepping-stone. The deepest will of man is towards this perfect, timeless existence; he is compact of the desire for immortality. That the woman has no craving for perpetual life is too apparent; there is nothing in her of that eternal which man tries to interpose and must interpose between his real self and his projected, empirical self." Really? And I dare to blame such a man!

W. did not come to this mad ranting all of a sudden, on the contrary, he only gradually got into it. We must therefore start from the beginning.

The first chapter of the second part contains introductory remarks.

The second deals with the sexual impulse, and in it, it is correctly stated that one cannot ascribe a stronger sexual instinct to one sex than the other, that the man is apparently

more involved as the attacking one, but that sexuality fills the entire life of the woman. The division of the sexual instincts into *detumescence* and *contractation* impulses, which Moll<sup>65</sup> suggested, and which seems to me to be a highly questionable matter, appeals to W. very much, and he quickly declares, without reasons, that woman has only the second part. This, too, is quite a bold assertion that women, in contrast to men, are sexually excitable from every point of the skin. The youth is quickly ready with that word, as it is repeated here and in what follows countless times.

Chapter 3 is more important. The old well-known fact that feelings play a more important part in woman's spiritual life than in that of man gives rise to profound arguments. Schopenhauer said that feeling means that something is present in consciousness that is not a concept, not an abstract knowledge of reason. W. invents a new expression: the *henid*, and is very proud of it. Now it is said that the woman thinks in terms of *henids*, the man thinks articulately, he lives consciously, she lives unconsciously, etc., etc.

Chapter 4 is about genius. Of course, W. does not miss the opportunity to explain in detail what he thinks of genius. One can also take a different view, but that does not belong here. I

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<sup>65</sup> Albert Moll (1862 – 1939) was a German psychiatrist and, together with Iwan Bloch and Magnus Hirschfeld, the founder of modern sexology. Moll believed sexual nature involved two entirely distinct parts: sexual stimulation and sexual attraction. [*Detumescence* and *contractation*: The former referred to the sexual act and was aimed at discharge and mere physical satisfaction; the latter to attraction to another individual: the impulse to think about a real or imagined partner, as well as to touch, feel, fondle or kiss him or her. Harry Oosterhuis, *Sexual Modernity in the Works of Richard von Krafft-Ebing and Albert Moll*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/mdh.2011.30>] In *The Sexual Life of the Child*, he encouraged parents to provide sex education to their children. T/N

liked the following sentence very much (p. 133): “In youth when a man is not yet certain of himself he may try to secure his own position by jostling others.” The conclusion is understandably that genius does not belong to women. I Agree.

The fifth chapter deals with talent and memory; we learn that high intellectual abilities mainly require a good memory. Of course, that is putting the cart before the horse. In general, memory is a function of basic forces; one remembers what he is capable of. A gifted person has a richer life than another, for what he experiences excites him more deeply than the superficial, and the events impress on him because he has put significant content into it. Since, by and large, women have only personal interests and take no real interest in things, the content of their memory will of course be relatively poor. But the assertion. women have a poorer memory than men for events which have been experienced with the same emotional involvement, and they are purely out of thin air. So when W. (p. 158) says that the continuity of personal memory is entirely absent in women, he again goes into exaggeration. Even bolder is the statement (p. 166) that women completely lack any need for immortality. Doesn't he feel any shame at all?

Memory and immortality are so connected that memory prevents memories from perishing, makes them timeless, in W's manner of speaking, that the timeless alone is valuable, that the striving for value is therefore ultimately directed towards the eternal.

Women lack memory, striving for value, longing for immortality. This topic is also dealt with in Chapter 6, which is entitled “Memory, Logic, Ethics.” By making bold leaps the conceptual artist arrives at logic (he calls it “a completely new type of transition”!) and establishes that for the absolute woman, there is no *principium identitatis* (and *contradictionis*

and *exclusi tertii*)<sup>66</sup>, that woman has no logic. This often heard sentence is correct in a certain sense, but with W. it is wrong. The laws of logic are those of the will itself (cf. my work "on Schopenhauer", p. 179); all undisturbed spiritual events take place according to them, and the animal is also subject to logic. The lack of logic which strikes us so much in women, is due partly to the fact that they cannot concentrate, partly to the fact that they are incapable of working with concepts of a larger scope.

The way to ethics goes through memory. All forgetting is immoral, "it is a duty not to forget anything." One can imagine that a being that has no memory and no logic also has no relation to ethics. Woman is not anti-moral, but she is "amoral." This expression, repeated countless times from then on, is very funny. Of course one could call women amoral, because they prefer to occupy themselves with Cupid, but W. means to say unethical. If one does not shy away from "in this regard" (p. 287, 581), then one should not, however, ask too much of one's feeling for language. I said the woman was not immoral, but morally defective. It doesn't sound nice either, but it is still better than amoral. I meant that the morality of women is emotional morality, conceptual morality is not her business. With W. there is only conceptual morality, so woman naturally comes away with nothing. The main part of female "amorality" is "mendacity." On p. 187 mendacity is wrongly derived from bad memory; a good liar just needs a good memory (cf.

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<sup>66</sup> *Principium identitatis*: the law of identity states that each thing is identical with itself.

*Principium contradictionis*: the law of non-contradiction states that contradictory propositions cannot both be true in the same sense at the same time.

*Principium exclusi tertii*: the law of excluded middle states that for any proposition, either that proposition is true or its negation is true. They form the three laws of thought. T/N

Talleyrand). In other places it is derived differently. I had shown that the relative mendaciousness of women is explained by the necessity of dissimulation in sexual life and by the desire of the weak for a weapon. But W. doesn't want to know anything about that, he only knows absolute mendacity. According to him, woman lies even when she speaks the truth (p. 384). I resist going further into these hollow declarations. Another joke! On p. 193 he says: "A man thinks himself unconscientious and blameworthy if he notices that he has not thought of a particular portion of his life for a long time." What splendid men must be found in the stalls and coffee houses of Vienna.

The 7<sup>th</sup> chapter opens a *Collegium Metalogicum*, and it is followed by an outline of "Ethics." Duty is everything, man only has duties towards himself, and "there is no further point in obeying duty." The prophet begins to rave.

Chapter 8 is even better: The "I" problem and genius, variations on the theme: The genius is a living microcosm. The endless repetitions go a long way in making reading painful.

Chapter 9, "Male and Female Psychology", returns "to the real task of investigation." This time it goes smoothly. We already know that women are stripped of memory, logic and ethics. Now it says briefly: "The absolute woman has no 'me'!" (in bold print), and everything is chewed through again. I just want to point out a few things. On p. 253 one finds completely nonsensical stuff about the criminal. On p. 255 it is said that the man is less suitable for nursing the sick because he could never share their pain, he would be completely worn out by it! On p. 255 it is stated that the woman does not know loneliness, she is "living in a condition of fusion" ["with all the human beings she knows, even when she is alone"]. That is correct, for the purpose of woman necessitates a kind of parasitic existence. But the author recognizes from this that the woman "is not a monad" (namely, men are such). "And where sexuality is

extinguished, there is also no pity: there is not even a single spark of that alleged goodness in the old woman" (p. 256 [We could not find the original quote, it was probably taken out in later editions]). On p. 257 begin shameless remarks about modesty. "Strong evidence of the want of modesty in woman is to be derived from the fact that women dress and undress in the presence of one another with the greatest freedom, whilst men try to avoid similar circumstances." Here you can see what kind of ideas W. has of you, and you wonder where he might have gained his experience. Towards the end it says (p. 269): "It has been exhaustively proved that the female is soulless and possesses neither ego nor individuality, personality nor freedom, character nor will."

As I read it all over again, manfully fighting down any nausea in the process, I feel compelled to take off my hat.

You shouldn't believe it, but it becomes even more disgusting in Chapter 10: "Motherhood and Prostitution." W. realizes that everyone will counter his abuse with motherly love. Yes, he says, that means nothing, because motherly love is immoral, and moreover the mother is only half of the woman, the other half is the prostitute. In Kant's sense, only action based on maxims is truly moral; action based on natural inclination is only a kind of preliminary stage. But according to W. it is immoral, i.e. reprehensible according to German usage. Later he declares love to be immoral in general, and it shows what an arid plant W's ethics are. The sane person turns away indignantly from a teaching that is synonymous with heartlessness; indeed, people who judge more harshly than I do would like to believe that "ethics" has a desperate resemblance to nefariousness. I want to talk about motherly love in another passage; it is hardly worthwhile to go into W's sentences. But I have to say a few more words about the prostitute. Prostitution is a form of degeneracy, and the prostitute corresponds to the

criminal among men. Certainly, human knowledge also includes that of the criminal, but criminal anthropology is an area of its own, because in halfway normal circumstances the criminal is an exception. So the prostitute is also an exception in a people who have not yet rotted away. At most in the dirt of the big city it may sometimes seem as if half of the women consist of prostitutes. Had it really been so, we would have perished long ago. Yes, only the purity of family life has preserved the existence of his own people, at which W. throws dirt, because the majority of Jewish women are rightly considered to be good wives and good mothers. The equality of mother and prostitute is disgusting and pointless. But if W. wants to count every coquetry, which also occurs in the harmless animal, as prostitute, then he commits a highly reprehensible shift in terms. In detail, understandably, one still encounters a lot of bad things, and the young man claims all kinds of things that nobody can know, he least of all. Courageously e. g. he explains that there is no woman who has not broken her loyalty in her mind without reproaching herself. On p. 277 we learn that great people have always only loved prostitutes. And so it goes on.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter, "Eroticism and Aesthetics", the philosophical phantasy begins again. We do not want to talk further about W's bold aesthetic, which culminates in the proposition that nature is created by art, not the other way around. It would go too far and I can refer to "art and artists." On the other hand, a few words were dedicated to W's "love." W. brings love and sexual desire into opposition, both are not possible at the same time, contact destroys love. There is something in the matter, but W. again distorts the truth. Perhaps one could best speak of "shy love" if one means the "high" love that Wolfram von Eschenbach sings about. It seems to occur under three conditions, as an introduction to real love, as poetic fiction and as a pathological phenomenon. Normal shy love is a matter for the as yet inexperienced youth, sweet

"foolishness", a popular theme among poets. The enthusiastic youth does not yet know what he wants, but if he is a nearly normal person, he does not stay in this stage. If he is a poet, then for technical reasons, so to speak, he will wish that enthusiasm should remain separate from reality, for reality is more conducive to his poetic activity. Petrarch e.g. cannibalized his shy love. I have already talked about the "eternally feminine" aspect of Goethe elsewhere. Imperceptible steps lead into the pathological. In the degenerate human being, love is split, the human being falls apart into Heinrich and Wolfram, and alongside such double beings we find purely sensual people here, purely enthusiastic people there. The love enthusiast who shuns touch always shows other signs of degeneracy; his caricature and perfection are those who suffer from so-called erotomania. These things are very closely related to hysteria, and it is precisely in W's presentation that the hysterical character is unmistakable.

The 12th chapter bears the profound title: "The Nature of Woman and her Significance in the Universe" has to occupy us a little longer. Right at the beginning (p. 342) there is a beautiful sentence: "the woman of the highest standard is immeasurably beneath the man of lowest standard." The courageous young man underlines that twice. Then follows the somewhat unclean execution about matchmaking. W. declares that the only positive thing that can be said of women is that she is a matchmaker. It is obvious that the woman, whose life's work is the procreation of the species, must be more interested in sexual affairs than in all others, that she should see the meaning of life in the union of the sexes and in the child, and be proud of her profession, the service of her God, as far as custom permits, will encourage it. So why W's declamations!?

W. rejects the objection that there are women who are different from his description of the woman, with the

explanation that such are hysterical. "The women who are uniformly quoted as proofs of female morality are always of the hysterical type" (*sic*). A long argument now follows in which the young doctor of philosophy makes it clear to us what this hysteria is all about. Following the teachings of Breuer and Freud, he regards hysterical disturbances as the effects of an inner struggle. The natural being in the woman certainly demands sexual union, but is confronted with a second personality, because through upbringing and custom the male notions of shameful, virginity, etc., have been suggested to the woman. In her unconscious mendacity, the patient considers the artificial ego to be the true one, the real one to be the enemy, or the "counter-will." The fact that the natural ego is subjugated creates the disease, the secret desires are "converted" into physical disorders, as Freud says. So much is correct in all of this that the struggle between flesh and spirit (to put it briefly) plays a major role in the female life, and yet many women are unaware of it, because from the outset the carnal ego is pushed below the threshold of consciousness; furthermore, that in persons with a hysterical disposition the inner struggle very often results in hysterical symptoms, and that many who have been praised for superhuman virtue were in fact hysterical (penitents, saints). On the other hand, there can be no question of the conflict between desire and custom in all hysterical people, and still less of such a conflict making people hysterical. Breuer and Freud's hypothesis is by no means generally accepted, and I consider it an inadmissible generalization. But these are neurologists' internal affairs after all. It is characteristic that in these difficult questions, on which the experts disagree and speak only with caution, the young philosopher knows no doubt at all; he rants and raves about it and tells doctors his opinion. I just want to note down a few more curiosities. " But anyone who allows him or herself to be hypnotized is doing the most immoral thing possible." (p. 364).

The acuteness of the hysterical woman is, according to W., a part of the suggested pseudo-personality! Incidentally, the majority of the sick is a dull society, and perspicacity is just as much an assumption among the hysterical as otherwise. The hysterical, according to W., is the type of servile woman and her opposite, the Megaera [an Erinys, or Fury], is never hysterical ["The woman who is not to be led is the antithesis of the hysterical woman. [...] The hysterical woman is hysterical because she is servile; mentally she is identical with the maidservant. Her opposite (who does not really exist) is the shrewish dame." ] (p. 368). I should be happy if W. made closer acquaintance with a hysterical Megaera. "The women who most nearly approximates to what has been called sexual anesthesia or frigidity are always hysterical, as Paul Sollier<sup>67</sup>, with whom I entirely agree, discovered." (p. 370). Where then could the clinician W. have acquired his valuable experience?

The second part of the chapter (the meaning in the universe) is dreadful. From him comes the position reproduced on p. 19. It goes along the lines of the earlier mock-philosophers: the man is the subject, the woman the object, the man is the form, the woman is the matter, the man is the something, the woman is the nothing. Woman is man's guilt, the criminal in man created woman, for she is nothing but the objectification of his sensuality. If someone is shameless, then he can easily philosophize.

The most hideous thing in the whole book is the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, and with it nausea has triumphed over my goodwill. This chapter, which could just as well have been left out, is about Judaism, i.e. W., who declares that he is himself a Jew, complains irrepressibly against Judaism. Both the Jew and the woman lack personality, spirit, "Kantian reason," the Jew is not

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<sup>67</sup> Paul Auguste Sollier (1861 – 1933) was a French doctor and psychologist. T/N

a gentleman, is completely shameless, etc. I do not have to investigate to what extent W. is wrong, but that prostitution is disgusting, I know already.

Now we come, thank God, to the last chapter, "Woman and Mankind," and we can be brief about it too. As we know, woman is embodied sexuality and nothing else. If sexuality is denied, then the woman must disappear and the story is over. In fact, W. (p. 456) says: "But it has been shown that woman is negative and ceases to exist the moment man determines to be nothing but true existence." "Ethics" teaches that man is never to be regarded as a means, but only as an absolute end. In the sexual union, however, man is regarded as a means. Ethics therefore demands complete chastity, cessation of sexuality, death of the woman. If W. had let his book end like this, there would have been consistency in the nonsense. But no, the hare darts sideways. W. quickly makes a new discovery and says (p. 450): "But woman has a faint idea of her incapacity, a last remnant, however weak, of intelligible freedom, simply because there is no such thing as an absolute woman." So hermaphroditism saves a woman's life. The "last remnant, however weak, of intelligible freedom" (!) seems to grow powerfully when the man no longer wants to have anything to do with the actual woman. On p. 457 we read that when the man is completely chaste, the woman perishes, " but only to be raised again from the ashes – new, restored to youth – as a real human being."

One might think W. was joking, but he never jokes. Of course, the fourth book by the young Schopenhauer comes to mind: The will turns, negates what is prior and puts an end to hardship. But with Schopenhauer's fantasies one has the impression of the deepest seriousness, and with W. one does not have it. The story gives the impression of a hysterical *contrefaçon* [counterfeit]. I'm not saying he doesn't mean it, but

it does seem like it isn't. With embarrassing feelings, reluctance mixed with regret, you close the book.

How is it that the pitiful young man has failed so badly? In the old days it sometimes happened that impatient people, for whom the right path seemed too long, devoted themselves to the devil in order to see their wishes granted. The devil promised to provide them with everything good quickly and effortlessly, but in the end it was an empty promise, and the story ended sadly. That is W's fate: He has devoted himself to the concept of the devil, and this mislead him. Man is given the instruction to acquire experience with dire efforts. Putting experience after experience, he builds a staircase that gradually leads him to further caution. He cannot fly, if he tries, the fate of Icarus overtakes him. The special thing about W's fate is that he tried to serve two masters at the same time. In the first part of his book he tried to stand on solid ground, and although his arrogant nature reveals itself there, with his "Principle" of the intermediate forms he has found a relatively flexible guide. Had he remained true to this principle, he would have had to understand that the difference between the sexes can only be relative. Otherwise intermediate forms would not be possible. But, the evil spirit has blown into him that he must not recognize relativity, that that is superficiality, that he must go for the absolute. W. serves this evil spirit in the second part of his book, and so he again destroys what he set up in the first part when he was still following tried and tested models. How can that which is "principally" different mix up? Can the character, "a constant, unified being", be divided into pieces? Can the intelligible "I" be split up? A horrible confusion reigns everywhere, and nothing fits together. If W. wants to be a second class priest, content with scholasticism, then at least he forms "a unified being." Then he doesn't need the biological knowledge, of which he has so laboriously acquired such a large amount, and everything takes place easily in the pure ether of

thought. But serving both sides, being a biologist on the right and a scholastic on the left, that is not possible.

W. is a witty person (cf. p. 132), wouldn't it be better if he wrote feature sections?

Now I say goodbye to W. forever. It's true, I've been a little bit angry with him, but his own words comfort me. He says (p. 230) that one shows one's respect by engaging with him, and one honors him when one tries to recognize him.<sup>68</sup> So he must recognize that I respect and honor him.

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<sup>68</sup> "But how do I show contempt for a person, and how do I show my respect for him? The first, by ignoring him; the second, by engaging with him. How do I use him as a means to an end, and how do I honor something in him that is an end in itself? The one by considering him only as a link in the chain of circumstances with which my actions have to reckon, the other by trying to recognize him." Otto Weininger, *Sex and Character*.

# **On the Moral Idiocy of Women**

**Katinka von Rosen**

**With a foreword by Dr. P. J. Möbius**

**Second edition**

**Halle a. S**

**Publishing house of Carl Marhold**

**1904**

### **Foreword by Dr. P. J. Möbius.**

I am particularly happy to comply with the request to write a preface to the second edition of Frau von Rosen's essay, *On the Moral Idiocy of Women*, because I would like to make a few remarks about the title. This could easily be misleading. At some point, doctors called "moral idiocy" a state based on degeneration in which a person easily gets to commit misdemeanors and crimes because they almost completely lack compassion and justice, although their other abilities are not disturbed to a higher degree. Of course, the author does not mean such an abnormal condition. On the other hand, the opinion could arise as if the "moral idiocy" were a counterpart to the "physiological idiocy" as I defined it. This view would be a mistake. With the words "physiological idiocy of women" I denote the fact that all brain functions of the healthy woman are lesser than that of the healthy man, if one disregards the love of children. If, however, all mental faculties are relatively weak in women, except for the love of children, this naturally also applies to moral faculties or the faculties on which they are based. So what the author considers is only part of the physiological idiocy. If one considers how the various actions that are conventionally called moral come about, it is obvious that a separation of the "moral" activity from the other mental activities is not possible. Self-control, for example, is not moral in itself, because even a villain can have it to a high degree and therefore be capable of more evil than another. But if the other faculties are assumed to be equal, then he who can control himself will be morally more competent than he who is overwhelmed by his excitement at that moment. Just as lack of self-control tends to lead to foolish and harmful actions, so too does lack of judgment inhibits goodness, for the so-called good will cannot prevent circumstances from being misjudged and ultimately harming one's neighbor. Consider the influence of cowardice, that of vanity, the domination of traditional errors or

prejudices. Everywhere it is shown that the right action presupposes a number of different abilities. So the correct title of Rosen's work would actually have to be: *About the physiological idiocy of women in moral terms.*

Of course, the author was only able to give a brief sketch in her short essay, only able to point to this or that particularly striking feature. If the subject were to be dealt with thoroughly, the work would be great and difficult. One ought to ask oneself first, what is morality? To this one could answer: the guiding principle of action; and as the supreme law one could say: act in any case in such a way that it is as beneficial to the whole as possible. It goes without saying that this is not the way to go in practice, because the individual cannot always know what is useful for the whole and what is not. So you say to the individual: act to the best of your knowledge and belief, i.e. do what your conscience advises you to do and if you are in doubt, consider the benefit of the whole as best you can. Accordingly, the directors of action are the moral sense, the presence of which is assumed in the approximately normal human being, and rational thinking. Since man and woman are very different, perhaps the directors of action are not the same in the sexes. There is no doubt that the rational thinking of man is different from that of woman. That the feminine conscience is not the same as the masculine one is also certain in some cases and at least probable in other cases. The directors of action can only give direction; whether the striving becomes a real action depends on the size of the resistance. The most varied instincts, affections, inclinations, passions, effects, habits, and in a broader sense also external circumstances, everything can promote or hinder this striving, and everything is different in a woman than in a man. If one only considers these few remarks, one can see that the fair judgment of male and female morality is not a simple matter. Here, as everywhere, it is injustice and folly to try to measure both sexes with the same yardstick. If,

for example, one wanted to draw a conclusion about morality from the various types of criminality, one would forget that the external circumstances are quite different, as are the internal drives. But one would also forget that misconduct alone is no measure of a person, that one should rather compare the positive achievements. If you will allow me an analogy, then the male morality resembles a large, spacious house, the female a small, simple one. From a practical point of view, it will ultimately emerge that the achievements of men must not be demanded of women, and that many things can be forgiven them, if only the specifically female morality does not suffer. The more woman is woman, the sooner she will meet the requirements of reason, for she will not only fulfill Nature's purposes, but will also be morally competent in her limited circle. But the more the woman becomes like the man, the more her feminine morality will suffer without her becoming capable of masculine morality. There are not only physical but also moral hybrids, and neither are beautiful.

Leipzig, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1903.

— Dr. P. J. Möbius.

## **Preface to the first edition**

Professor Möbius – in my opinion in a very amiable way – explained to women their inferiority with respect to the intellect. The derogatory reviews from women confirm the truth of his words. The women have provided evidence of physiological idiocy in their answers.

I would like to deal with the moral idiocy of women, which seems to me to be a greater obstacle to the development of the human race than the physiological one, and which is probably more important to combat and, if possible, to improve – than to strive for brain activity over its efficiency.

I should be sorry if my short essay gave the impression that I lacked respect for women. I learned from my mother to respect, love and adore women. – The modern woman, however, who renounces her best virtues, inspires me neither respect nor admiration. For religious, moral, and national reasons I am her opponent.

K. v. R.

## Preface to the second edition

It is an old custom to give a second preface to a second edition. A new custom is to add the criticisms that have come in the meantime<sup>69</sup>. I am no friend of this innovation – it is too American for me – but because I want this short booklet to be distributed, I accept the advice of my experienced publisher.

Professor Möbius, who is unknown to me personally, wrote the preface at the request of Mr. Marhold. I am grateful for any lesson taught, and I am proud that Dr. Möbius considered it worthwhile to refute me objectively.

As far as the criticisms that have come in are concerned, there is really nothing to be said about them, for one cannot call scolding criticism, and they do not contain a refutation. Since the reviews deal more with me than with the content of my writing, I, too, will limit my answers to the personal attacks.

In the *papers for the German housewife* they think I'm young, they speak of a childlike sorry effort! How I would like to agree. I suspect, however, that I could be the critic's grandmother. A woman who is in her mid-sixties has the right and the duty to call herself old – and one can trust her to have some knowledge of human nature.

I can assure the *Oberschlesische Zeitung* that I have never felt myself to be a slave – imperiousness is closer to me.

With my assertion that one should shout "cherchez la femme" in the case of a man's crimes, I did not want to flatter men; I wanted women to be aware of the power that they have exercised and still exercise over men at all times. I regret that I

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<sup>69</sup> Those criticisms, which make up the last two pages of Mrs. von Rosen's essay, are not part of this translation. T/N

am being misunderstood; I shall take greater clarity in my next work, which will be about man's moral idiocy. I hope to meet Messrs. Critic again.

I have soldier's blood and to hide behind a pseudonym would seem like cowardice to me. I always fight with an open visor, I fight for the German woman whom I love and adore above all else.

K. v. R.

All women, whether they belong to the feminists or are followers of the good old days, claim all virtues for themselves, while faults are attached to the man. Many resign themselves to their physiological idiocy, more out of laziness and stupidity than out of a proper grasp of the matter; they console themselves with the thought that as far as morality is concerned they are far above men.

As long as we women do not break with certain delusions and come to the realization that we also suffer from moral idiocy and that the virtues which we consider feminine are to be found in a far higher degree in men, the desired development of women will make no progress.

As an example of superior morality, it is pointed out that the number of male criminals is greater. When it comes to the execution of great crimes that require mental exertion, the man will always prevail. But whether the murderer or the arsonist was not assisted by a female helper or a female fence, and whether it was not she who suggested the idea of the act to him, is a question that often forces itself out of my mind. The burden of embezzlement of any kind, of which men are often guilty, is on women. The fact that men are so pathetic as to allow themselves to be seduced does nothing to change the moral idiocy of women.

All the crimes that a man commits are in some way connected with a woman; it is she who stimulates desire and covetousness in him, angering him when his courage begins to sink; it is she who stifles every human impulse in him and finally delivers him up to earthly justice. The man will never sink as low as the woman, a remnant of humanity often still exists in the crudest criminal; in the woman it is extinguished. The female alcoholic or the female prostitute will end her life in the gutter in spite of the rescue attempts by humanitarian associations! –

The numerous poisonings of the past and present bear witness to the cruelty and cold-bloodedness of women. To administer poison for weeks or months, feigning love and caring for the unfortunate victim is a crime which the worst man would not be capable of!

Crimes committed by men have, on average, a greatness about them – weakness does not cling to them, they seize the people's soul. At the sentencing of the robber and murderer Kneisl<sup>70</sup>, more or less everyone felt compassion. His crimes were condemned by the people, but his courage, recklessness, and the cold-bloodedness with which he risked his life in the pursuit of his crimes were admired. – Everyone probably also had the feeling that this criminal possessed qualities with which he could have achieved great things.

With Elise Häusler the people's soul boiled over. The people had only contempt for that criminal. There was not even the smallest quality in Elise Häusler that could have aroused interest or compassion in us. The past shows us clearly the difference between male and female criminals. In men we will – if we want to and can judge objectively, which is not always the case with women – find some quality, it can also be a vice, the magnitude or brutal violence of which occupies our interest and our admiration. I couldn't name a woman in history whose crimes we could feel anything but contempt for.

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<sup>70</sup> Mathias Kneißl (1875 – 1902) was a German outlaw, poacher and popular social rebel in the Dachau district, in the Kingdom of Bavaria. Chased by the police, Kneißl became a legendary hero with the rural people because of his witty and artful fight against the authorities. The Court then sentenced him to receive the death penalty for murder and 15 years imprisonment on the other charges. Sentenced on a Monday, Kneißl allegedly sarcastically remarked: "Well, that's a good start of a week." T/N

The trait of cruelty, which in wicked women reaches its climax with poisoning, is present in all in a milder form. The teasing and joking of women always lack harmlessness. With a smiling mouth she knows how to strike her best friends with small blows that often hurt a lot. We are happy about a new dress, we immediately hear that it is too long or too short, too tight or too wide and that we would have done better: to choose a blue instead of a green color. – The joy is completely spoiled for us and as often as we put on the dress, we get angry. Or we did something stupid – the friend, instead of raising her warning voice in time, shrouds herself in silence. One must not interfere with the inconvenience of others! One can accept this reason – but as soon as we have done the stupid thing and have to face the often unpleasant consequences, one goes: "Yes, I said that right away" – or "If you had done like this and not like that," etc. etc. – You could eventually shake off these sayings from yourself, but the cruelty and glee that lie hidden underneath the apparent good-naturedness and friendship leave a sting behind. – Mistress and servant vie in mutual cruelty; the winner remains whoever achieves the greatest perfection in the exercise of this talent. The atrocities that mothers of the lower classes inflict on their children are well known. But also the educated woman, the so-called "good mother", torments hers. In the presence of strangers, she reminds them of misdeeds committed and atoned by punishment, or of bad testimonies, she reprimands them at the wrong time; she pushes the child away lovelessly when she is absorbed in reading a shallow novel, forbids him from having fun because she is in a bad mood or nervous, as the expression goes. Cruelty underlies these useless and pointless tortures on the part of the mother. The bad mood from which the female sex so often suffers is cruelty, unless it is caused by a disease of the nervous system. Torturing her neighbor gives her a voluptuous pleasure, to which she surrenders herself with full

awareness. Even when it comes to caresses, the beast often appears in the woman.

Now let's look at the man. The uneducated can be corrupt, become a brutal beast through drunkenness, beat wife and children to death. The educated one inflicts untold suffering on his wife through unfaithfulness, he can be a gambler and drinker, get into debt, end up committing suicide and leave the family in misery. They are bad people and are rare. Cruelty is not part of the character of the German man – he is violent, irascible, rude and unlovable. Occasionally he will hit his children, throw an unparliamentary expression at the servants' heads and leave the house without saying goodbye to his wife if she has annoyed him very much, but teasing his neighbors with little zingers is far from his mind. His jokes and jests are not always socially acceptable, nor are they suitable for the ears of young daughters, but they do not hurt. No, the man is not cruel – if he is, then he is one of those corrupt, woman-like creatures who are punished as criminals or who deserve our pity as unhappy.

In women, vindictiveness and unforgiveness go hand in hand with cruelty. The woman never forgets a wrong done to her; she thinks she forgives, but the forgiveness granted is one more oppressive burden for the sinner, while a feeling of proud satisfaction for the one granting it. The woman is never finished with a thing, even after years she will come back to the past, every suffering that people inflicted on her will be magnified, the good will be forgotten, reproaches will be made – reproaches that are all the more bitter because the injustice committed has often lapsed and can no longer be felt.

The man forgives his friend if he does not kill him – with forgiveness, with the silent handshake, there, is the old friendship – the old trust is restored and the matter is settled once and for all. If the man cannot or does not want to forgive,

he strikes the friend or the woman who inflicted the offense on him from his life and from his heart. The woman does not do that, she holds on to the outer bond, she believes that she is fulfilling her neighborly duty with it – and yet it is only vengeance that slumbers unconsciously inside her. In the case of small offenses, as they are inevitable in daily life, women have a myriad of small acts of revenge available – if "my headache" does not work, then food is denied – they fast and believe that they are punishing those around them. No man falls for such absurdities!

Women lack a sense of justice and respect for their neighbor's property. No child distinguishes between mine and yours, what it sees it desires. Parents tend to encourage this innate urge. The child enters school without any understanding of mine or yours. Boys teach each other respect for their property through beatings. This drastic but functional means of education is not used in girls' schools. It is illegal for girls to defend one's property with one's fists. From a pedagogical point of view, "accusations" are considered to be more beneficial to the development of the female character; it is safe to assume that the accusations are not always based on unconditional truth – also that innate feminine faults develop with the accusations, boastfulness, lies, slander and the like. How, with such educational principles, girls can be taught legal concepts is one of the things that my physiological idiocy prevents me from understanding. When I make the assertion that women lack respect for other people's property, I do not mean, of course, that women are thieves in the ordinary sense of the word. But what about the secrecy of letters? Don't most women consider themselves authorized to read their husbands' letters? And when jealousy grabs them – to open and withhold them too? And how often does curiosity drive women to read letters that are not intended for them. But even concerning the disregard vis-a-vis the confidentiality of correspondence, a reason for

mitigation can be found in faulty upbringing. In boarding schools, the headmistress reads the letters that her pupils send and receive; even correspondence with the parents is under supervision. It is unclear to me what the aim of this completely unjustified encroachment on the girls' personal freedom is. I can assure the headmasters of the institute, who are very prone to vigilance, that love letters fly in and out of all boarding schools and that their watchfulness – even if they have a hundred eyes – is of no use, they are not up to the cunning of their pupils. The love letters are quite harmless, the poetic, often unorthographic outpouring of juvenile celadons have never lured a girl into ruin. But it is a fact that the boarding schools, with their misguided pedagogy, develop all the vices that we are accused of, such as lying, dissimulation, hypocrisy, envy, tendency to intrigue and many others, and promote moral idiocy instead of improving it; it is a fact which cannot be disputed out of hand, and changing it should be one of the most important tasks of our reform-addicted times. The girls who leave these institutions unspoiled are exceptional – elite natures! which, thank God, can still be found in our German Empire! –

But the greatest interference with the rights of a person is committed by women when they desire the love of a married man. Unfortunately, with the modern "idolatry of the ego," marital divorces are also the order of the day. There is nothing that shows a woman's moral idiocy more than when she uses her seductive skills to attract someone else's man. The poor woman who steals bread for her child is condemned, but the fact that she steals the love of her husband from her fellow woman not only goes unpunished, but she often achieves her goal of becoming the husband's wife. It will be argued that the guilt falls on the faithless husband, that it is he who seduces the woman – possibly, but it is up to every woman to show the seducer the door and to protect herself from sinful love.

I do not deny the possibility of a woman falling in love with a married man, but one can demand of any decent woman that she respect the rights of her fellow woman and not build her happiness, which is almost always based on deception, on the misfortune of another. – But the man does too! He seduces countless women and destroys the happiest marriages, or so I keep hearing. Certainly there are dishonorable men, but in their relationship with women they are the weaker sex and almost always the ones seduced. I have nothing to do with rough fellows who use brutal violence, I write for educated people and it will not occur to any educated man to seduce a married woman if she does not want to be seduced. In addition, the husband is free to shoot the seducer – how he comes to terms with her is up to him. The wife, however, whose husband succumbs to the temptation and who is held by the seductress, is powerless, she must, whether she wants to or not, let him go.

Compassion, involvement, and love for one's neighbor are attributes of femininity and as such they are denied to men. There are women who have been given the heavenly gift to find the right word at the right time, women whose presence is enough to bring peace and quiet to the tormented heart – but they are exceptional; for most, compassion and involvement is a sport. Vanity, curiosity, mixed with a small dose of harmful frenzy, make them seek misfortune. To comfort the sick and the suffering is her delight. The victims of their involvement are showered with comforting words and at the end the warning is given to them – but to be very grateful, because others have to bear even greater suffering. Should that be any consolation? If I suffer – what do I care if others cry! And if we have risen to that Christian and moral height which should be our hottest wish to attain – the thought that others suffer even more than we should increase our pain. The professional female consolers are a torment for woe hearts!

Charity is a dressy garment that is put on to attract people's attention. Even for ladies whose "sport" is charity, recognition and reward are not lacking. Charity is badly cheated and, despite increasing humanitarianism, it is on the wane.

Should I now sing praises of the man again? My age allows me this joy. I have found so much warm sympathy with my male friends that I have come to believe that compassion, sympathy, and charity can also be found in men. Women love emotional excitement, the French expression "emotions" is more indicative, they resemble champagne in their tingling charms and are chosen by the female sex, the man evades them. Small accidents do not arouse his sympathy, and as soon as his wife has a headache or nervous conditions, he will flee as quickly as possible. He will only give sympathy to real suffering if it can help or alleviate the pain. But in spite of this, the man possesses these qualities, which are celebrated as female virtues. In exercising it, he is often "over" us.

Vanity, addiction to grooming and lavishness are blamed on women. I would like to speak about the fault of vanity, it is present to a far lesser extent than one is used to assume. A beautiful woman will be aware of her beauty – the mirror tells her and people pay homage to her – and rightly so, because the sight of a beautiful woman is a pleasure! I would like to compare them to a person who is happy about his strength and health, but without attaching particular importance to these goods. We only learn to appreciate health when we lose it. The woman too only becomes vain when youth and beauty begin to vanish, wants to hold on to them both by force, and tries to deceive herself and others with powder and make-up.

I admit the woman's addiction to grooming, up to a certain limit it must exist. If the woman is neither vain nor addicted to grooming, she will neglect herself and dress in a messy and tasteless manner. That must not be the case, every person,

whether man or woman, has to look after their body, which is a precious commodity, and this also includes simple and attractive clothing, adapted to the external circumstances. There is a rather wrong view of the reasons why women love grooming. In their vanity men imagine that all women groom and adorn themselves because of them. I would like to clear up this error for the benefit of the stronger sex. The girl, whose heart begins to stir, will adorn herself for "him," only want to please "him." The endeavor to face the man she loves and whose love she longs for as favorably as possible is understandable. The man will not show himself to her in shirt sleeves and slippers either – actually he shouldn't appear like that in front of his wife later – just incidentally! – The woman always only dresses up for one man, whether out of love, vanity, or interest, we will leave it open, but as soon as there is no feeling of any kind for one – she only dresses up for other women. The homage of all men does not give her the satisfaction but the awareness of outdoing other women, of annoying them by the splendor and richness of her dresses, and of exciting their envy – women are never kind to each other. The man's assurance that his wife pleases him even in the simplest clothes is listened to with a pitying smile, which is meant for his stupidity and vanity. She doesn't need a new dress to please him, but because some woman in some society was dressed in the very latest fashion.

The woman actually has no talent for squandering, greed is closer to her. She wastes large sums of money, often goes into debt, and seduces men to commit crimes of many kinds – but more out of ostentation and because "one" does it than to indulge in pleasures. She is petty about wasting, she pays thousands for clothes, yet will owe her servants their wages.

Women will not be able to deny the reproach of jealousy, and in no quality does the moral idiocy of feminine nature come

to light as clearly as in the accidents due to blind, unjustified jealousy. The feeling that dominates the woman when the husband's love dies out and turns to someone else cannot be dismissed with the word jealousy. This is pain. The happiness of life is destroyed, and what causes the greatest torment for women is that belief in past happiness, in love enjoyed, is also lost! – Because if love was real, it does not cease, neither with the man nor with the woman!

The small detours into the Venusberg<sup>71</sup> can be compared to the champagne rush that fades after a night of sleep. I do not consider intoxication or the Venusberg to be an absolute necessity, but I do believe that a sensible woman will act smarter if she lets her husband sleep in and spares herself the reproaches. She rewards the sinner's bad seeds with good ones of her own, and he will avoid temptation next time, because to appear small in the eyes of the wife is not pleasant to the Lord of creation. The wife's behavior, as soon as an alleged rival appears, is a union of physiological and moral idiocy. Whatever reason and morality she possesses is lost, she becomes stupid and wicked. If the man admires the beauty of a woman or if he likes to talk to a witty one – jealousy awakens immediately. First, the husband is made aware of small blemishes – women always spot them! In his touching naivety he contradicts her – he did not notice anything – there are things that the man does not think of; if he is convinced of his wife's love, she can admire all the men in the world without arousing his jealousy. Gradually the accusations begin, followed by scenes that end in tears and that every man thoroughly detests. Then nervous conditions

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<sup>71</sup> Venusberg is a motif of European folklore rendered in various legends and epics since the Late Middle Ages. It is a variant of the folktale topos of "a mortal man seduced by the fairy queen visits the otherworld" (as in Thomas the Rhymer). In German folklore of the 16th century, the narrative becomes associated with the minnesinger Tannhäuser. T/N

come, she wraps herself in silence – a very worrying sign! – is inaccessible – evades him! – The man in his harmlessness and ignorance of the female character has no idea of her grief and with the greatest impartiality he pays homage to the rival. Finally, however, his eyes open – his wife slanders the rival, she becomes hateful, untruthful, and finally forgets herself to the point that she offends the innocent woman. No man can take that, he is indignant about injustice. Stubbornness is added to jealousy, and women will seldom see an injustice and initiate reconciliation. How the relationship between the man and the other then takes shape depends on the other. If she is a clever and good woman, then she will have recognized the weakness of the jealous wife and will withdraw in time – but if there is also moral idiocy in her, then the defeat of the foolish woman will give her a triumph, and she will try to tie the man to herself. The unfounded jealousy and the tortures associated with it can lead the husband to commit the unfaithfulness that was expected of him. The woman is to blame! The jealousy of women often extends to their children, especially their sons, and the often intolerable relationship between wife and mother-in-law is almost always based on jealousy. Even the man's male friends are not pleasant to the woman and particularly childish ones want to get rid of the man's profession and work.

But girlfriends also torture each other with jealousy. Girlfriends and female friendships are something of their own, a touch of hysteria clings to them. Girlfriends are the prelude to love – a transition stage. The bonds of friendship that are later made by single women – are a surrogate for a lack of love and a lack of happiness – one will therefore never be able to look at them without sadness. Girls' friendships almost always end with marriage. The happily married woman feels no need to continue the friendship – the husband is her friend. The unfortunate one must not have a girlfriend or confidante. The unhappiness of

marriage does not lend itself to discussion and quite often it has been female friends who disrupted a marriage – by magnifying small dissonances that were entrusted to them, as women are wont to do – through compassion and involvement, brought about a rupture that could have been avoided without them. I can only advise husbands to keep female friends away.

In the friendship between women, there is jealousy, sensitivity, reconciliation, and a great deal of confidence that is believed to be trust. Every little thing is discussed and the greatest importance attached to it. The need to see and express oneself daily is lively, but nevertheless everyone closes what moves their heart, and unconditional openness based on truth is seldom present. Girl friendships start at school, later ones just happen by chance, coincidence brings them together; there is all sorts of talk about soul community, and women are quick to use the name girlfriend. That word is abused very badly, many friendships break up and often end in enmity.

How different is a man, he has comrades, he has colleagues, he has ministers, when he is called a friend he is thrifty, but if he has one, he has him for life. No fold of his heart remains hidden from his friend, but he does not consider it necessary to tell him whether he has bought a red or black tie. And whether they haven't seen each other for years or know nothing of each other, the friendship remains, if they come together as older men, the old trust is restored in the first half hour.

I do not want my judgment on female friendship to evoke the impression – as if I do not consider women capable of friendship – I know women who are self-sacrificing, loyal and true even in friendship; that they are among the exceptions probably all who look around with open eyes have experienced. That women's friendships are seldom based on inner truth can probably be explained by the fact that they are naturally hostile to one another. If we go through the whole animal kingdom, we

will find that the females never get along. And since we have a great deal of resemblance to animals in spite of all culture, it seems to me that the open or secret opposition of the female sex corresponds to a law of Nature. The women's rights activists will not share this view, in the meantime they have joined forces in friendship to fight their common enemy – called the man. It is an unnatural alliance and will therefore bring vengeance upon itself sooner or later.

Even if the opposition of women does not always come to light, and there are also some who are linked by a close bond of friendship, we must not hide from ourselves that the influence that women exercise on one another is great and rarely a good one. – The man is the natural friend of the woman – and he is her best educator! Since we women like to lull ourselves into daydreams, fooling ourselves into ideals that do not correspond to reality, there is a lack of understanding that only women can raise girls and that feminine influence is their best protection. This belief has become dogma, and many mothers guard their daughters from interaction with men, as the hen does guard her chickens from the marten.

Single women tend to associate almost exclusively with girlfriends, men appear only sporadically in their lives. The consequence of this one-sided interaction is an increase in moral idiocy and the pathological addiction to develop one's ego<sup>72</sup>. Women who stand next to, above or below their husbands and are lucky enough to be mothers attach little importance to their ego – it develops by itself. The idolization of the self is one of the contagious diseases to which women are particularly receptive. One must endeavor to exterminate it. It is dangerous and poisons our female youth. Does the development of the ego really have the meaning that is

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<sup>72</sup> Ego, here and thereafter, is to be understood in the Freudian acceptance of the word. T/N

attached to it? And do the paths we women take lead to our goal? Every human being must strive to improve themselves, to discard mistakes as far as possible, but what is now understood by "development of the ego," "personal life," and as all modern buzzwords are called, has nothing in common with the ennoblement of human beings. What women call development is selfishness, vanity, and self-importance. These qualities develop to the highest perfection in all women who lack the opportunity to become aware of their weaknesses in interaction with the man – perhaps they evade him in the fear of seeing their wisdom fail miserably. Man and woman are natural allies, they complement each other, their friendly and unscrupulous interaction contributes to the mutual development and ennobling of the ego.

Now I have a bone to pick with Professor Möbius! – In his work *On the Physiological Idiocy of Women* I found only one statement which can be challenged, but which was not objected to by either friends or opponents. He says on page 69: "A real progress for the better would be the return to the monastic idea. The radical fight against monasticism was and is one of the greatest follies of the Reformation and of liberalism. Recently, monastery imitations have been unconsciously evoked, such as the deaconess-houses, the [religious] sisters-houses in general" – at the end Professor Möbius writes: "This too is certain, that especially for the female nature the monastic life in the sense meant here will most likely grant a substitute for natural happiness. Perhaps the need must still grow before reason penetrates, but it will."

These words contradict the author's judgment of women, a judgment which one has to accept without reservation. The fact that Professor Möbius advocates monasteries should put his opponents in a mild mood; it is a recognition of woman – which she does not deserve. I believe that the professor is lacking

experience in this direction. If he could stay in any sister institution, ignored, a few days would be enough to change his favorable judgment on monasteries of any kind.

As venerable as the individual woman can be, so – I must use the harsh expression – she becomes contemptible in community with many. If it were up to me, monasteries, all deaconesses and sister houses, girls' schools and boarding schools would have to be closed. There the woman is corrupted! It has now become fashionable to brand men as seducers of women, to blame women for female vices. That is a lie – for out of ten girls one may be ruined by a man – women are to blame for the ruin of the others.

Our main mistake, however, which has a myriad of vices behind it, is untruthfulness. By untruthfulness I do not mean lies of opportunity, which are hard to change in exchanges and are quite compatible with a person's truthfulness. The truth fanatics, who consider it their duty to tell us rude things, are unbearable in their ruthlessness. The lies of bad people of both sexes, which are brought forward for their own benefit or to the detriment of others, can also be regarded as exceptions. The woman seldom utters a positive lie; The English have a very telling expression for women, whose veracity they doubt, they say: "she did not go round the corner" – i.e., she will come to a corner, that is, she will only tell half the truth, she will keep quiet more than she will lie. The woman resembles the man who, when he mentions his debts, always withholds some of them, even when he knows that they could be paid.

Woman is morally cowardly. She will never stand up for her words and actions. Every human being has to bear and atone for the consequences of sins committed, but woman will always know how to shift the responsibility from herself, and inside she will always burden others with the whole guilt. Moral cowardice and malice underlie all gossip, cover-up, and writing of

anonymous letters. Temperamental women will often get carried away into expressing their own personal opinion about someone who is absent. Everyone is entitled to this right, it would be wiser to hold one's tongue, but there is no injustice in this. It is mean, however, when the often quite harmless words are brought to the attention of the person concerned – even meaner if the intention is to sow discord and mistrust between spouses, siblings, friends. I cannot absolve women of this accusation. They hold back their own opinions, they submit to us that of the others and tell us gossip the truth of which they were not convinced of. What people say behind our backs can be of no consequence to us as long as our honor, which we have to defend, is not attacked. But giving us pinpricks under the pretext of friendship is cruel and mean. These kinds of friends should fall under our contempt. With regard to the life of her soul, woman tends to suffer from strange delusions which are more or less based on untruth. The German woman is healthy and true in her feelings – rather she was. Foreign influence, however, has given rise to the seed of untruth that clings to the female sex. Modern woman is untrue, untrue in her aspirations and assertions, untrue in her feelings. The literature of the feminists, as Professor Möbius calls these heavily degenerate women, is a wild fabric of lies. Just as the anatomist occupies himself with the human body for scientific purposes and strives to research the internal organism, so the modern woman breaks down that wondrous thing – called the woman's soul – into the smallest atoms and describes to us sensations, feelings, impulses, which may very well correspond to her imagination, but never to the truth. Some tell us about "slavery" – what they write about this popular topic is a lie. Others work on the "longing for the child" in all possible variations; volumes are published about "motherhood." The very bold, who do not consider the woman to be sexless, indulge in "sexuality," and

the sentimentalists delight us with poetic outpourings about the "misery of the female soul."

But before I deal with the feminists, I would like to test love for its truth. The emotional life of the woman and her ability to love is often overestimated by her and by the man. If love were calculated in terms of weight and measure, the man's love would prove to be heavier. There is not a single reason to believe that the weaker woman should be superior to the man in strength, passion, and loyalty in love!

The belief that the ability to love is innate in all women and that they only live in love is a poetic delusion. If we look a little more closely at the woman's mental life, we soon become aware that the soul, if it is present at all, is often dormant and that the woman's heart is only a hollow muscle that regulates life, but has nothing to do with love. What we call the love of women in ordinary life is not worth much. – But it is up to men to judge them. I find that love is often just a decorative item, such a kind of festive garment for solemn occasions, with which all kinds of nakedness are covered. Love, after all, belongs to the woman, and many even give in to the delusion that they cannot live without "it," namely love. It seems to me that most of them get along quite well without love – satisfaction of the sexual instinct is sufficient for them. But sex drive is not love, both can get along without each other – only where both connect with each other one may and can sing the high song of love!

Love needs a healthy, strong soil, it does not flourish everywhere and is only rarely found. The sex drive is of a different kind, it takes root everywhere and shoots up powerfully even under weeds. – Genuine love, which remains alive well into old age, needs spiritual education or culture. In the uneducated classes, where the sexual instinct is considered love, it will die out with youth; what then binds the spouses is

habit, the children, and the daily worries. They do not know what we call love. Our modern culture, however, stifles love, and since we are too educated to be content with the sexual drive, women have fallen for all sorts of lies.

The longing for the child can only be found in its naturalness among the uncultivated peoples – with us it is a lie of women’s rights activists – a poetic paraphrase for the longing for the man! In the lower classes, children mean work and hardship – the longing shouldn’t be great – in the higher classes it is usually satisfied with the birth of the heir. Before going to the registry office, the girls often inquire about the precautions that must be taken to prevent conception – for they believe that giving birth to children requires the sacrifice of beauty and youth. It does not occur to them that they would commit a crime against Nature and humiliate themselves to be the spouse’s mistress. – And the crimes that are committed against the budding life testify to "the longing for the child"? Don’t you understand what the advertisements you read in the newspapers every day and which promise "advice and help in all discreet matters" mean? It is not seduced girls whom fear of shame makes them commit a crime – it is women who do not want children because they are a nuisance to them! The longing for the child is the most shameless lie of modern culture, devised by women who want to destroy marriage in order to be able to indulge in free love in unlimited freedom.

In the good old days, little girls played with a doll much more eagerly than now – they did not know the longing for the child, it only came to them in marriage.

In addition to the longing for the child, we have motherhood, with which a terrible humbug is played. The word mother is dragged into the mud, "motherhood", which is the most sacred thing on earth, becomes a disgust to us. In the past, mothers loved their children – now they talk about

"motherhood." Books are written about maternal duties – duties that are not fulfilled.

The mothers of the lower classes do not have time to devote themselves to their numerous children, whom they thoughtlessly and callously gave birth to. Charity has come up with the strange idea of relieving them of the duties of motherhood by taking the children from them for care and upbringing. If one wants to keep the people healthy and strong, the children of the poor must be cared for, but they should only be taken from bad mothers, and the good ones should be given the means to be able to fulfill their maternal duties. To stifle the best in women does not seem to me to be a good thing.

The women of the higher and highest classes discharge themselves of their duties by placing the care of their children onto others. No – motherhood is not far off. There are enough mothers in the world, but they are only mothers in name. Some consider their children, if they are pretty, as jewelry – which serves as a foil to their beauty. To become a mother is a simple natural process; to be a mother is a serious, often difficult, duty which should fill a woman's whole life. Gossiping about motherhood doesn't.

As for the relationship of the sexes to one another, the "new women" with their views, writings and lectures have created such a confusion that one often does not know whether one is waking or dreaming. Professor Möbius has thoroughly put an end to the belief that women are capable of competing with men in the intellectual sphere. Anyone who still participates cannot be helped. We women must vigorously defend ourselves against other lies that are now being spread and demoralizing our growing youth. The desire for equal rights, which modern women also demand in sexual relationships, contradicts the law of Nature and is a lie. In the young, healthy woman the sexual instinct will occasionally stir; if she finds no

satisfaction, then she will go through temporary struggles and not achieve the full development of her ego, as we now say. The normal woman, however, can and will find her way when fate denies her the fulfillment of her natural calling. The female sexual instinct is not as bad as the feminists describe, and whoever tries to put it on an equal footing with men's in this direction is belittling it. With the demand for equal rights one shakes our German marriage – it is free love that is suggested to our German women!

Freedom is the buzzword with which the "new woman" attracts the female youth. The word freedom has a powerful magic that the uneducated, youth and women seldom resist. But freedom is a term that only few people understand, for most it means putting aside morality, law and custom, an unlimited "living out." They do not feel that freedom can only be found within oneself.

But we hear what Professor Möbius says in "*Sex and Degeneration*" about women who assume the role of leaders in our country.

“The masculine woman strives for freedom and wants to get rid of custom. She discovers that she lives in slavery, that she is unworthy of being anything more than a lover and mother, and she demands pants. Out of the nursery and into the male professions. The man, that clumsy muscular animal, is the enemy, because only his lust for power has held back the aspiring woman and has artificially created the intellectual sex differences. Equality is the goal and similarity with the evil man the heart's desire. The absolute female, the traditional woman, is treated with pitying contempt and regarded as the result of degeneracy. This strange reversal of concepts is quite understandable from the point of view of those who desire liberation or emancipation. Apparently they find confirmation of their view in experience, for the same degeneracy that has

produced them gives rise to a conspicuous number of girls with originally masculine talents and inclinations; these form their retinue, and since many traditional women are also happy to join in new fashions, the army grows handsomely. The success, of course, shows the sickness of the whole, for it consists in the supply of inferior male work and in the diminution of female achievements."

Let us now take a closer look at the slavery under which women languish and perish in marriage. The girl – it is said – makes sacrifices and gives up her freedom. Every community, every profession, every contract imposes duties on man and every duty requires sacrifices. The spouses have to have duties and make sacrifices, presumably free love would also demand some, because without mutual duties and sacrifices the women's rights activist will hardly imagine a cohabitation; if they were missing, the woman would only be a "brood hen."

The first sacrifice the girl makes to the man is her virginity – she makes it "ignorantly." Well, I think the "enlightenment" is performed so thoroughly by the feminists that nobody believes in the "ignorance" of our modern youth anymore.

I'm not old-fashioned as to demand "ignorance," I do not like fighting windmills, and I do not usually make unattainable demands. Our modern progress – one can consider it to be a step backwards – demands enlightenment in all areas, therefore one must not and cannot withhold it from girls. My protest is therefore only to the way it is given through the lectures, writings, and novels of the feminists. "Enlightenment" can only be given to young people in school by a competent teacher, on a scientific basis. The constant chatter about "sexual instinct," "longing for the child," and "motherhood" is evil and must stop: I admit that, despite scientific instruction, girls face surprises – often even embarrassing ones – in marriage. Nothing can be changed about that – because all theory is gray and the

introduction into practice is only for the husband. That is his inviolable right. In addition to virginity, the girl sacrifices her freedom and the development of her ego on the altar of marriage. It seems to me that if in marriage there can be talk of giving up freedom, the man gives it up – he is the slave! Why the community with the husband, the children's room and the kitchen should be an obstacle to the development of the woman, it doesn't make sense to me; marriage seems to me to promote the development of the female ego – also, I do not know of any men who oppose the development of their wives – unfortunately they always concede too large a field to female idiocy and let themselves be suggested a lot of foolishness, many even become woman-like. No – there is really no such thing as slavery, it exists only in the heads of degenerate women.

In their madness for freedom, the feminists forget to reckon with healthy, mentally and morally superior women. The higher the woman stands, the greater her desire to be subordinate to her husband and the less she pushes for external freedom – besides, it is the German type of woman and I think we want to uphold that! -

As for the achievements of the modern woman, it is not worth saying much about it. If one or the other finds their daily bread with it, then one can be happy about the success and grant it to them, but for the world, for humanity they are completely worthless. The woman who chooses a male profession out of necessity is quite harmless, because most young girls will prefer men. Marriage and motherhood cannot be combined with any of the man's professions. This is a dangerous mistake. Should the woman's physiological idiocy fail to recognize this, the state must intervene and declare: Without celibacy – in the broadest sense – no employment. It will be objected that the proletarian woman in factories etc. works –

that is a misfortune which the state should be concerned to remedy, but to increase the misfortune by depriving the educated female population of their natural occupation is a crime. Division of labor is demanded everywhere in life; the woman is content with the share which the wise providence assigned to her. If the girl is not so happy to be able to fulfill her profession in marriage, if her own will or fate has denied her the luck of becoming a wife and mother, she must look for a sphere of activity that corresponds to her natural disposition. A woman is seldom so completely detached from all ties that she should not find people to whom she could be useful with her feminine abilities and virtues. The poor, the sick, children and those who suffer are everywhere if there are no closer obligations to be fulfilled.

The man-like women are the most harmless, they certainly lure the youth down the wrong path, but the instinct of women ultimately allows the girls to find the right path.

Feminist literature is dangerous – a corrosive poison that demoralizes. One does not console oneself with the fact that young people do not read books; they are all read, devoured with greed and lust. They would be found in school bags and boarding houses.

Professor Möbius' verdict on modern women's literature is thus: "In the past, men wrote love stories and women read them. Now they both read and write them both; a hermaphroditic literature has developed that is unparalleled in its twisted nature."

The stench of a corpse emanates from them, which is characteristic of all women who are physically or morally corrupt. Only a sick woman can write such books – healthy ones should not read them. -

But I have one more reproach for the feminists – they go hand in hand with socialism and international Judaism. Contributing to the destruction of one's nation is a crime. A people that had a Luther, a Goethe and a Bismarck, men whom the whole world envies us, has to defend itself against foreign, unhealthy influences. It is time to recognize the enemies in our own country and to bravely declare war on them!

Germany's women have to take up the fight – it is important to defend their German marriage and to protect their daughters!



“With the words "physiological idiocy of women" I denote the fact that all brain functions of the healthy woman are lesser than that of the healthy man, if one disregards the love of children.”

P. Möbius

Paul Julius Möbius (January 24, 1853 – January 8, 1907) was a German neurologist born in Leipzig.

*On the Physiological Idiocy of Women* went through eight editions during his lifetime.

A polemic erupted with the publication in 1903 of Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character*, both books dealing with the same subject, namely the essential differences between men and women. Weininger even went so far as to claim that Möbius accused him of plagiarism. The later comments on the matter and clears it for his readers in his essay *Sex and Immodesty*.