

**ALEXANDER
FRANCIS
CHAMBERLAIN**



**THE CHILD AND
CHILDHOOD
IN FOLK-
THOUGHT**

Alexander Francis Chamberlain

The Child and Childhood in Folk-Thought

**Studies of the Activities and Influences of the Child
Among Primitive Peoples, Their Analogues and
Survivals in the Civilization of To-Day**

EAN 8596547370673

DigiCat, 2022

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CHAPTER I.

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CHILD-STUDY.

Oneness with Nature is the glory of Childhood; oneness with Childhood is the glory of the Teacher.—*G. Stanley Hall.*

Homes ont l'estre comme metaulx,
Vie et augment des vegetaulx,
Instinct et sens comme les bruts,
Esprit comme anges en attributs.
[Man has as attributes: Being like metals,
Life and growth like plants,
Instinct and sense like animals,
Mind like angels.]—*Jehan de Meung.*

The Child is Father of the Man.—*Wordsworth.*
And he [Jesus] called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them.—*Matthew xviii. 2.*

It was an Oriental poet who sang:—
"On parent knees, a naked, new-born child,
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled;

So live, that, sinking in thy last, long sleep,
Calm thou mayst smile, while all around thee weep,"

and not so very long ago even the anthropologist seemed satisfied with the approximation of childhood and old age,—one glance at the babe in the cradle, one look at the graybeard on his deathbed, gave all the knowledge desired or sought for. Man, big, burly, healthy, omniscient, was the subject of all investigation. But now a change has come over the face of things. As did that great teacher of old, so, in our day, has one of the ministers of science "called to him a little child and set him in the midst of them,"—greatest in the kingdom of anthropology is assuredly that little child, as we were told centuries ago, by the prophet of Galilee, that he is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. The child, together with woman, who, in so many respects in which the essential human characteristics are concerned, so much resembles him, is now beyond doubt the most prominent figure in individual, as well as in racial, anthropology. Dr. D. G. Brinton, in an appreciative notice of the recent volume on *Man and Woman*, by Havelock Ellis, in which the secondary sexual differences between the male and the female portions of the human race are so well set forth and discussed, remarks: "The child, the infant in fact, alone possesses in their fulness 'the chief distinctive characters of humanity. The highest human types, as represented in men of genius, present a striking approximation to the child-type. In man, from about the third year onward, further growth is to some extent growth in degeneration and senility.' Hence the true tendency of the

progressive evolution of the race is to become child-like, to become feminine." (*Psych. Rev.* I. 533.)

As Dr. Brinton notes, in this sense women are leading evolution—Goethe was right: *Das Ewig-weibliche zieht uns hinan*. But here belongs also the child-human, and he was right in very truth who said: "A little child shall lead them." What new meaning flashes into the words of the Christ, who, after declaring that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you," in rebuke of the Pharisees, in rebuke of his own disciples, "called to him a little child and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Even physically, the key to the kingdom of heaven lies in childhood's keeping.

Vast indeed is now the province of him who studies the child. In Somatology,—the science of the physical characteristics and constitution of the body and its members,—he seeks not alone to observe the state and condition of the skeleton and its integuments during life, but also to ascertain their nature and character in the period of prenatal existence, as well as when causes natural, or unnatural, disease, the exhaustion of old age, violence, or the like, have induced the dissolution of death.

In Linguistics and Philology, he endeavours to discover the essence and import of those manifold, inarticulate, or unintelligible sounds, which, with the long flight of time, develop into the splendidly rounded periods of a Webster or

a Gladstone, or swell nobly in the rhythmic beauties of a Swinburne or a Tennyson.

In Art and Technology, he would fain fathom the depths of those rude scribblings and quaint efforts at delineation, whence, in the course of ages, have been evolved the wonders of the alphabet and the marvellous creations of a Rubens and an Angelo.

In Psychology, he seeks to trace, in childish prattlings and lore of the nursery, the far-off beginnings of mythology, philosophy, religion. Beside the stories told to children in explanation of the birth of a sister or a brother, and the children's own imaginings concerning the little new-comer, he may place the speculations of sages and theologians of all races and of all ages concerning birth, death, immortality, and the future life, which, growing with the centuries, have ripened into the rich and wholesome dogmas of the church.

Ethnology, with its broad sweep over ages and races of men, its searchings into the origins of nations and of civilizations, illumined by the light of Evolution, suggests that in the growth of the child from helpless infancy to adolescence, and through the strong and trying development of manhood to the idiosyncrasies of disease and senescence, we have an epitome in miniature of the life of the race; that in primitive tribes, and in those members of our civilized communities, whose growth upward and onward has been retarded by inherited tendencies which it has been out of their power to overcome, or by a *milieu* and environment, the control and subjugation of which required faculties and abilities they did not possess, we see, as it

were, ethnic children; that in the nursery, the asylum, the jail, the mountain fastnesses of earth, or the desert plains, peopled by races whose ways are not our ways, whose criteria of culture are far below ours, we have a panorama of what has transpired since, alone and face to face with a new existence, the first human beings partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and became conscious of the great gulf, which, after millenniums of struggle and fierce competition, had opened between the new, intelligent, speaking anthropoids and their fellows who straggled so far behind.

Wordsworth has said: "The child is father of the man," and a German writer has expanded the same thought:—

"Die Kindheit von heute
Ist die Menschheit von morgen,
Die Kindheit von heute
Ist die Menschheit von gestern."
["The childhood of to-day
Is the manhood of to-morrow,
The childhood of to-day
Is the manhood of yesterday."]

In brief, the child is father of the man and brother of the race.

In all ages, and with every people, the arcana of life and death, the mysteries of birth, childhood, puberty, adolescence, maidenhood, womanhood, manhood, motherhood, fatherhood, have called forth the profoundest thought and speculation. From the contemplation of these strange phenomena sprang the esoteric doctrines of Egypt

and the East, with their horrible accompaniments of vice and depravity; the same thoughts, low and terrible, hovered before the devotees of Moloch and Cybele, when Carthage sent her innocent boys to the furnace, a sacrifice to the king of gods, and Asia Minor offered up the virginity of her fairest daughters to the first-comer at the altars of the earth-mother. Purified and ennobled by long centuries of development and unfolding, the blossoming of such conceptions is seen in the great sacrifice which the Son of Man made for the children of men, and in the cardinal doctrine of the religion which he founded,—“Ye must be born again,”—the regeneration, which alone gave entrance into Paradise.

The Golden Age of the past of which, through the long lapse of years, dreamers have dreamt and poets sung, and the Golden City, glimpses of whose glorious portal have flashed through the prayers and meditations of the rapt enthusiast, seem but one in their foundation, as the Eden of the world's beginning and the heaven that shall open to men's eyes, when time shall be no more, are but closely allied phases, nay, but one and the same phase, rather, of the world-old thought,—the ethnic might have been, the ought to be of all the ages. The imagined, retrospect childhood of the past is twin-born with the ideal, prospective childhood of the world to come. Here the savage and the philosopher, the child and the genius, meet; the wisdom of the first and of the last century of human existence is at one. Childhood is the mirror in which these reflections are cast,—the childhood of the race is depicted with the same

colours as the childhood of the individual. We can read a larger thought into the words of Hartley Coleridge:—

"Oh what a wilderness were this sad world,
If man were always man, and never child."

Besides the anthropometric and psycho-physical investigations of the child carried on in the scientific laboratory with exact instruments and unexceptionable methods, there is another field of "Child-Study" well worthy our attention for the light it can shed upon some of the dark places in the wide expanse of pedagogical science and the art of education.

Its laboratory of research has been the whole wide world, the experimenters and recorders the primitive peoples of all races and all centuries,—fathers and mothers whom the wonderland of parenthood encompassed and entranced; the subjects, the children of all the generations of mankind.

The consideration of "The Child in Folk-Thought,"—what tribe upon tribe, age after age, has thought about, ascribed to, dreamt of, learned from, taught to, the child, the parent-lore of the human race, in its development through savagery and barbarism to civilization and culture,—can bring to the harvest of pedagogy many a golden sheaf.

The works of Dr. Ploss, *Das kleine Kind*, *Das Kind*, and *Das Weib*, encyclopædic in character as the two last are, covering a vast field of research relating to the anatomy, physiology, hygiene, dietetics, and ceremonial treatment of child and mother, of girl and boy, all over the world, and forming a huge mine of information concerning child-birth,

motherhood, sex-phenomena, and the like, have still left some aspects of the anthropology of childhood practically untouched. In English, the child has, as yet, found no chronicler and historian such as Ploss. The object of the present writer is to treat of the child from a point of view hitherto entirely neglected, to exhibit what the world owes to childhood and the motherhood and the fatherhood which it occasions, to indicate the position of the child in the march of civilization among the various races of men, and to estimate the influence which the child-idea and its accompaniments have had upon sociology, mythology, religion, language; for the touch of the child is upon them all, and the debt of humanity to the little children has not yet been told. They have figured in the world's history and its folk-lore as *magi* and "medicine-men," as priests and oracle-keepers, as physicians and healers, as teachers and judges, as saints, heroes, discoverers, and inventors, as musicians and poets, actors and labourers in many fields of human activity, have been compared to the foolish and to the most wise, have been looked upon as fetiches and as gods, as the fit sacrifice to offended Heaven, and as the saviours and regenerators of mankind. The history of the child in human society and of the human ideas and institutions which have sprung from its consideration can have here only a beginning. This book is written in full sympathy with the thought expressed in the words of the Latin poet Juvenal: *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia*, and in the declaration of Jean Paul: "I love God and every little child."

CHAPTER II.

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THE CHILD'S TRIBUTE TO THE MOTHER.

A good mother is worth a hundred schoolmasters.—
English Proverb.

The first poet, the first priest, was the first mother.
The first empire was a woman and her children.—*O. T. Mason.*

When society, under the guidance of the "fathers of the church," went almost to destruction in the dark ages, it was the "mothers of the people" who saved it and set it going on the new right path. —*Zmigrodski* (adapted).

The story of civilization is the story of the mother. —
Zmigrodski.

One mother is more venerable than a thousand fathers.
—*Laws of Manu.*

If the world were put into one scale, and my mother into the other, the world would kick the beam.—*Lord Langdale.*

Names of the Mother.

In *A Song of Life*,—a book in which the topic of sex is treated with such delicate skill,—occurs this sentence: "The

motherhood of mammalian life is the most sacred thing in physical existence" (120. 92), and Professor Drummond closes his *Lowell Institute Lectures on the Evolution of Man* in the following words: "It is a fact to which too little significance has been given, that the whole work of organic nature culminates in the making of Mothers—that the animal series end with a group which even the naturalist has been forced to call the *Mammalia*. When the savage mother awoke to her first tenderness, a new creative hand was at work in the world" (36. 240). Said Henry Ward Beecher: "When God thought of Mother, he must have laughed with satisfaction, and framed it quickly,—so rich, so deep, so divine, so full of soul, power, and beauty, was the conception," and it was unto babes and sucklings that this wisdom was first revealed. From their lips first fell the sound which parents of later ages consecrated and preserved to all time. With motherhood came into the world song, religion, the thought of immortality itself; and the mother and the child, in the course of the ages, invented and preserved most of the arts and the graces of human life and human culture. In language, especially, the mother and the child have exercised a vast influence. In the names for "mother," the various races have recognized the debt they owe to her who is the "fashioner" of the child, its "nourisher" and its "nurse." An examination of the etymologies of the words for "mother" in all known languages is obviously impossible, for the last speakers and interpreters of many of the unwritten tongues of the earth are long since dead and gone. How primitive man—the first man of the race—called his mother,

we can but surmise. Still, a number of interesting facts are known, and some of these follow.

The word *mother* is one of the oldest in the language; one of the very few words found among all the great branches of the widely scattered Aryan race, bearing witness, in ages far remote, before the Celt, the Teuton, the Hellene, the Latin, the Slav, and the Indo-Iranian were known, to the existence of the family, with the *mother* occupying a high and honourable place, if not indeed the highest place of all. What the etymological meaning was, of the primitive Aryan word from which our *mother* is descended, is uncertain. It seems, however, to be a noun derived, with the agent-suffix *-t-r*, from the root *ma*, "to measure." Skeat thinks the word meant originally "manager, regulator [of the household]," rejecting, as unsupported by sufficient evidence, a suggested interpretation as the "producer." Kluge, the German lexicographer, hesitates between the "apportioner, measurer," and the "former [of the embryo in the womb]." In the language of the Klamath Indians of Oregon, *p'gishap*, "mother," really signifies the "maker."

The Karankawas of Texas called "mother," *kaninma*, the "suckler," from *kanin*, "the female breast." In Latin *mamma*, seems to signify "teat, breast," as well as "mother," but Skeat doubts whether there are not two distinct words here. In Finnish and some other primitive languages a similar resemblance or identity exists between the words for "breast" and "mother." In Lithuanian, *móte*—cognate with our *mother*—signifies "wife," and in the language of the Caddo Indians of Louisiana and Texas *sássin* means both

"wife" and "mother." The familiar "mother" of the New England farmer of the "Old Homestead" type, presents, perhaps, a relic of the same thought. The word *dame*, in older English, from being a title of respect for women—there is a close analogy in the history of *sire*—came to signify "mother." Chaucer translates the French of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, "Enfant qui craint ni père ni mère Ne pent que bien ne le comperre," by "For who that dredeth sire ne dame Shall it abie in bodie or name," and Shakespeare makes poor Caliban declare: "I never saw a woman, But only Sycorax, my dam." Nowadays, the word *dam* is applied only to the female parent of animals, horses especially. The word, which is one with the honourable appellation *dame*, goes back to the Latin *domina*, "mistress, lady," the feminine of *dominus*, "lord, master." In not a few languages, the words for "father" and "mother" are derived from the same root, or one from the other, by simple phonetic change. Thus, in the Sandeh language of Central Africa, "mother" is *n-amu*, "father," *b-amu*; in the Cholona of South America, *pa* is "father," *pa-n*, "mother"; in the PEntlate of British Columbia, "father" is *mãa*, "mother," *tãa*, while in the Songish *mãn* is "father" and *tan* "mother" (404. 143).

Certain tongues have different words for "mother," according as it is a male or a female who speaks. Thus in the Okanak·ên, a Salish dialect of British Columbia, a man or a boy says for "mother," *sk'õi*, a woman or a girl, *tõm*; in Kalispelm the corresponding terms for "my mother" are *isk'õi* and *intoop*. This distinction, however, seems not to be so common as in the case of "father."

In a number of languages the words for "mother" are different when the latter is addressed and when she is spoken of or referred to. Thus in the Kwakiutl, Nootka, and Çatloltq, three British Columbia tongues, the two words for "mother" are respectively *ât*, *abókuk*; *ãt*, *abEmp*; *nikH*, *tãn*. It is to be noted, apparently, that the word used in address is very often simpler, more primitive, than the other. Even in English we find something similar in the use of *ma* (or *mama*) and *mother*.

In the Gothic alone, of all the great Teutonic dialects,—the language into which Bishop Wulfila translated the Scriptures in the fourth century,—the cognate equivalent of our English *mother* does not appear. The Gothic term is *aithiei*, evidently related to *atta*, "father," and belonging to the great series of nursery words, of which our own *ma*, *mama*, are typical examples. These are either relics of the first articulations of the child and the race, transmitted by hereditary adaptation from generation to generation, or are the coinages of mother and nurse in imitation of the cries of infancy.

These simple words are legion in number and are found over the whole inhabited earth,—in the wigwam of the Redskin, in the tent of the nomad Bedouin, in the homes of cultured Europeans and Americans. Dr. Buschmann studied these "nature-sounds," as he called them, and found that they are chiefly variations and combinations of the syllables *ab*, *ap*, *am*, *an*, *ad*, *at*, *ba*, *pa*, *ma*, *na*, *da*, *ta*, etc., and that in one language, not absolutely unrelated to another, the same sound will be used to denote the "mother" that in the second signifies "father," thus evidencing the applicability of

these words, in the earliest stages of their existence, to either, or to both, of the parents of the child (166. 85). Pott, while remarking a wonderful resemblance in the names for parents all over the world, seeks to establish the rather doubtful thesis that there is a decided difference in the nature of the words for "father" and those for "mother," the former being "man-like, stronger," the latter "woman-like, mild" (517. 57).

Some languages apparently do not possess a single specialized word for "mother." The Hawaiian, for example, calls "mother and the sisters of the mother" *makua wahine*, "female parent," that being the nearest equivalent of our "mother," while in Tonga, as indeed with us to-day, sometimes the same term is applied to a real mother and to an adopted one (100. 389). In Japan, the paternal aunt and the maternal aunt are called "little mother." Similar terms and appellations are found in other primitive tongues. A somewhat extended discussion of names for "mother," and the questions connected with the subject, will be found in Westermarck (166. 85). Here also will be found notices of the names among various peoples for the nearest relatives of the mother and father. Incidentally it is worth noting that Westermarck controverts Professor Vambéry's opinion that the Turko-Tartar words for "mother," *ana*, *ene*, originally meant "nurse" or "woman" (from the root *an*, *en*), holding that exactly the reverse is the fact, "the terms for *mother* being the primitive words." He is also inclined to think that the Aryan roots *pa*, "to protect, to nourish," and *ma*, "to fashion," came from *pa*, "father," and *ma*, "mother," and not *vice versâ*. Mr. Bridges, the missionary who has studied so

well the Yahgans of Tierra del Fuego, states that "the names *imu* and *dabi*—father and mother—have no meaning apart from their application, neither have any of their other very definite and ample list of terms for relatives, except the terms *macu* [cf. *magu*, "parturition"] and *macipa* [cf. *cipa*, "female"], son and daughter." This statement is, however, too sweeping perhaps (166. 88).

According to Colonel Mallery, the Ute Indians indicate "mother" by placing the index finger in the mouth (497a. 479). Clark describes the common Indian sign as follows: "Bring partially curved and compressed right hand, and strike with two or three gentle taps right or left breast, and make sign for *female*; though in conversation the latter is seldom necessary. Deaf mutes make sign for *female*, and cross hands as in their sign for *baby*, and move them to front and upwards" (420. 262). Somewhat similar is the sign for "father": "Bring the compressed right hand, back nearly outwards, in front of right or left breast, tips of fingers few inches from it; move the hand, mostly by wrist action, and gently tap the breast with tips of fingers two or three times, then make sign for *male*. Some Indians tap right breast for 'father,' and left for 'mother.' Deaf-mutes make sign for *male*, and then holding hands fixed as in their sign for *baby*, but a little higher, move the hands to front and upwards" (420. 167).

Interesting is the following statement of Mr. Codrington, the well-known missionary to the Melanesians:—

"In Mota the word used for 'mother' is the same that is used for the division [tribe?] *veve*, with a plural sign *ra veve*. And it is not that a man's kindred are so called after his

mother, but that his mother is called his kindred, as if she were the representative of the division to which he belongs; as if he were not the child of a particular woman, but of the whole kindred for whom she brought him into the world." Moreover, at Mota, in like fashion, "the word for 'consort,' 'husband,' or 'wife,' is in a plural form *ra soai*, the word used for members of a body, or the component parts of a canoe" (25. 307-8).

Mother-Right.

Since the appearance of Bachofen's famous book on the matriarchate, "mother-right," that system of society in which the mother is paramount in the family and the line of inheritance passes through her, has received much attention from students of sociology and primitive history.

Post thus defines the system of mother-right:—

"The matriarchate is a system of relationship according to which the child is related only to his mother and to the persons connected with him through the female line, while he is looked upon as not related to his father and the persons connected with him through the male line. According to this system, therefore, the narrowest family circle consists not, as with us to-day, of father, mother, and child, but of mother, mother's brother, and sister's child, whilst the father is completely wanting, and the mother's brother takes the father's place with the sister's children. The real father is not the father of his own children, but of his nephews and nieces, whilst the brother of his wife is looked upon as father to his children. The brothers and sisters of the mother form with her a social group, to which

belong also the children of the sisters, the children of the daughters of the sisters, etc., but not the children of the brothers, the children of the sisters' sons, etc. With every husband the relationship ceases" (127. l. 13-14).

The system of mother-right prevails widely over the whole globe; in some places, however, only in fragmentary condition. It is found amongst nearly all the native tribes of America; the peoples of Malaysia, Melanesia, Australia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, the Dravidian tribes of India; in Africa it is found in the eastern Sahara, the Soudan, the east and west coast, and in the centre of the continent, but not to the exclusion, altogether, of father-right, while in the north the intrusion of Europeans and the followers of Islam has tended to suppress it. Traces of its former existence are discovered among certain of the ancient tribes of Asia Minor, the old Egyptians, Arabs, Greeks, Romans, Teutons, the Aryans of India, the Chinese, Japanese, etc.

Mother-right has been recognized by many sociologists as a system of family relationship, perhaps the most widespread, perhaps the most primitive of all. Dr. Brinton says:—

"The foundation of the gentile system, as of any other family life, is ... the mutual affection between kindred. In the primitive period this is especially between children of the same mother, not so much because of the doubt of paternity, as because physiologically and obviously, it is the mother in whom is formed, and from whom alone proceeds, the living being" (412. 47).

Professor O. T. Mason, in the course of his interesting address on

"Woman's Share in Primitive Culture," remarks (112. 10):—

"Such sociologists as Morgan and McLennan affirm that the primitive society had no family organization at all. They hypothecate a condition in which utter promiscuity prevailed. I see no necessity for this. There is some organization among insects. Birds mate and rear a little family. Many animals set up a kind of patriarchal horde. On the other hand, they err greatly who look among savages for such permanent home life as we enjoy. Marriages are in groups, children are the sons and daughters of these groups; divorces are common. The fathers of the children are not known, and if they were, they would have no authority on that account. The mother never changes her name, the children are named after her, or, at least, are not named after the father. The system of gentes prevails, each gens consisting of a hypothetical female ancestress, and all her descendants through females. These primitive men and women, having no other resort, hit upon this device to hold a band of kin together. Here was the first social tie on earth; the beginning of the state. The first empire was a woman and her children, regardless of paternity. This was the beginning of all the social bonds which unite us. Among our own Indians mother-right was nearly universal. Upon the death of a chief whose office was hereditary, he was succeeded, not by his son, but by the son of a sister, or an aunt, or a niece; all his property that was not buried with him fell to the same parties, could not descend to his children, since a child and the father belonged to different gentes." McLennan has discussed at some length the subject of kinship in ancient Greece (115. 193-246), and

maintains that "the system of double kinship, which prevailed in the time of Homer, was preceded by a system of kinship through females only," referring to the cases of Lycaon, Tlepolemus, Helen, Arnaeus, Glaucus, and Sarpedon, besides the evidence in the *Orestes* of Euripides, and the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus. In the last, "the jury are equally divided on the plea [that Orestes was not of kin to his mother, Clytemnestra, whom he had killed, —"Do you call *me* related by blood to my mother?"], and Orestes gains his cause by the casting vote of Athene." According to tradition, "in Greece, before the time of Cecrops, children always bore the name of their mothers," in marked contrast to the state of affairs in Sparta, where, according to Philo, "the marriage tie was so loose that men lent their wives to one another, and cared little by whom children were begotten, provided they turned out strong and healthy."

We have preserved for us, by Plutarch and others, some of the opinions of Greek philosophers on the relation of the father and the mother to the child. Plato is represented as calling "mind the conception, idea, model, and *father*; and matter the mother, *nurse*, or seat and region capable of births." Chrysippus is said to have stated: "The foetus is nourished in the womb like a plant; but, being born, is refrigerated and hardened by the air, and its spirit being changed it becomes an animal," a view which, as McLennan points out, "constitutes the mother the mere nurse of her child, just as a field is of the seed sown in it."

The view of Apollo, which, in the council of the gods, influenced Athene to decide for Orestes, is this:—

"The bearer of the so-called offspring is not *the mother* of it, but only the nurse of the newly conceived foetus. It is the male who is the author of its being; while she, as a stranger, for a stranger, preserves the young plant for those for whom the god has not blighted it in the bud. And I will show you a proof of this assertion; one *may* become a father without a mother. There stands by a witness of this in the daughter of Olympian Zeus, who was not even nursed [much less engendered or begotten] in the darkness of the womb" (115. 211). "This is akin to the wild discussion in the misogynistic Middle Ages about the possibility of *lucina sine concubitu*. The most recent and most scholarly discussion of all questions involved in "mother-right" will be found people in the world; for it stands on record that the five companies (five hundred men) recruited from the Iroquois of New York and Canada during our civil war stood first on the list among all the recruits of our army for height, vigour, and corporeal symmetry" (412. 82). And it was this people too who produced Hiawatha, a philosophic legislator and reformer, worthy to rank with Solon and Lycurgus, and the founder of a great league whose object was to put an end to war, and unite all the nations in one bond of brotherhood and peace.

Among the Choctaw-Muskogee tribes, women-chiefs were also known; the Yuchis, Chetimachas, had "Queens"; occasionally we find female rulers elsewhere in America, as among the Winnebagos, the Nah-ane, etc. Scattered examples of gynocracy are to be found in other parts of the world, and in their later development some of the Aryan races have been rather partial to women as monarchs, and striking instances of a like predilection are to be met with

among the Semitic tribes,—Boadicea, Dido, Semiramis, Deborah are well-known cases in point, to say nothing of the Christian era and its more enlightened treatment of woman.

The fate of women among those peoples and in those ages where extreme exaltation of the male has been the rule, is sketched by Letourneau in his chapter on *The Condition of Women* (100. 173-185); the contrast between the Australians, to whom "woman is a domestic animal, useful for the purposes of genesic pleasure, for reproduction, and, in case of famine, for food," the Chinese, who can say "a newly-married woman ought to be merely as a shadow and as an echo in the house," the primitive Hindus, who forbade the wife to call her husband by name, but made her term him "master, lord," or even "god," and even some of our modern races in the eye of whose law women are still minors, and the Iroquois, is remarkable. Such great differences in the position and rights of women, existing through centuries, over wide areas of the globe, have made the study of comparative pedagogy a most important branch of human sociology. The mother as teacher has not been, and is not now, the same the world over.

As men holding supreme power have been termed "father," women have in like manner been called "mother." The title of the queen-mother in Ashanti is *nana*, "Grandmother" (438. 259), and to some of the Indian tribes of Canada Queen Victoria is the "Great White Mother," the "Great Mother across the Sea." In Ashanti the "rich, prosperous, and powerful" are termed *oman enna*, "mothers of the tribe," and are expected to make suitably large

offerings to the dead, else there will be no child born in the neglectful family for a certain period (438. 228).

With the Romans, *mater* and its derivative *matrona*, came to be applied as titles of honour; and beside the rites of the *parentalia* we find those of the *matronalia* (492. 454).

In the ancient Hebrew chronicles we find mention of Deborah, that "mother in Israel."

With us, off whose tongues "the fathers," "forefathers," "ancestors" (hardly including ancestresses) and the like rolled so glibly, the "Pilgrim Fathers" were glorified long before the "Pilgrim Mothers," and hardly yet has the mother of the "father of his country" received the just remembrance and recognition belonging to her who bore so noble and so illustrious a son. By and by, however, it is to be hoped, we shall be free from the reproach cast upon us by Colonel Higginson, and wake up to the full consciousness that the great men of our land have had mothers, and proceed to re-write our biographical dictionaries and encyclopædias of life-history.

In Latin *mater*, as does *mother* with us, possessed a wide extent of meaning, "mother, parent, producer, nurse, preparer, cause, origin, source," etc. *Mater omnium artium necessitas*, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and similar phrases were in common use, as they are also in the languages of to-day. Connected with *mater* is *materia*, "matter,"—*mother*-stuff, perhaps,—and from it is derived *matrimonium*, which testifies concerning primitive Roman sociology, in which the mother-idea must have been prominent, something we cannot say of our word *marriage*, derived ultimately from the Latin *mas*, "a male."

Westermarck notes the Nicaraguans, Dyaks, Minahassers, Andaman Islanders, Pádam, Munda Kols, Santals, Moors of the Western Soudan, Tuaregs, Teda, among the more or less primitive peoples with whom woman is held in considerable respect, and sometimes, as among the Munda Kols, bears the proud title "mistress of the house" (166. 500, 501). As Havelock Ellis remarks, women have shown themselves the equals of men as rulers, and most beneficial results have flowed from their exercise of the great political wisdom, and adaptation to statecraft which seems to belong especially to the female sex. The household has been a training-school for women in the more extended spheres of human administrative society.

Alma Mater.

The college graduate fondly calls the institution from which he has obtained his degree *Alma Mater*, "nourishing, fostering, cherishing mother," and he is her *alumnus* (foster-child, nourished one). For long years the family of the benign and gracious mother, whose wisdom was lavished upon her children, consisted of sons alone, but now, with the advent of "sweeter manners, purer laws," daughters have come to her also, and the *alumnae*, "the sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair," share in the best gifts their parent can bestow. To Earth also, the term *Alma Mater* has been applied, and the great nourishing mother of all was indeed the first teacher of man, the first university of the race.

Alma, alumnus, alumna, are all derived from *alo*, "I nourish, support." From the radical *al*, following various

trains of thought, have come: *alesco*, "I grow up"; *coalesco*, "I grow together"; *adolesco*, "I grow up,"—whence *adolescent*, etc.; *obsolesco*, "I wear out"; *alimentum*, "food"; *alimonium*, "support"; *altor*, *altrix*, "nourisher"; *altus*, "high, deep" (literally, "grown"); *elementum*, "first principle," etc. Connected With *adolesco* is *adultus*, whence our *adult*, with the radical of which the English word *old* (*eld*) is cognate. From the root *al*, "to grow, to make to grow, to nourish," spring also the Latin words *prôles*, "offspring," *suboles*, "offspring, sprout," *indôles*, "inborn or native quality."

"Mother's Son."

The familiar expression "every mother's son of us" finds kin in the Modern High German *Muttersohn*, *Mutterkind*, which, with the even more significant *Muttermensch* (human being), takes us back to the days of "mother-right." Rather different, however, is the idea called up by the corresponding Middle Low German *modersone*, which means "bastard, illegitimate child."

Lore of Motherhood

A synonym of *Muttermensch* is *Mutterseele*, for soul and man once meant pretty much, the same. The curious expression *mutterseelenallein*, "quite alone; alone by one's self," is given a peculiar interpretation by Lippert, who sees in it a relic of the burial of the dead (soul) beneath the hearth, threshold, or floor of the house; "wessen Mutter im Hause ruht, der kann daheim immer nur mit seiner Mutterseele selbender allein sein." Or, perhaps, it goes back to the time when, as with the Seminoles of Florida, the babe

was held over the mouth of the mother, whose death resulted from its birth, in order that her departing spirit might enter the new being.

In German, the "mother-feeling" makes its influence felt in the nomenclature of the lower brute creation. As contrasted with our English female donkey (she-donkey), mare, ewe, ewe-lamb, sow, doe-hare (female hare), queen-bee, etc., we find *Mutteresel*, "mother-donkey "; *Mutterpferd*, "mother-horse"; *Mutterschaf*, "mother-sheep"; *Mutterlamm*, "mother lamb"; *Mutterschwein*, "mother swine"; *Mutterhase*, "mother-hare"; *Mutterbiene*, "mother-bee."

Nor is this feeling absent from the names of plants and things inanimate. We have *Mutterbirke*, "birch"; *Mutterblume*, "seed-flower"; *Mutternelke*, "carnation"; *Mutternagelein* (our "mother-clove"); *Mutterholz*. In English we have "mother of thyme," etc. In Japan a triple arrangement in the display of the flower-vase—a floral trinity—is termed *chichi*, "father"; *haha*, "mother"; *ten*, "heaven" (189. 74).

In the nursery-lore of all peoples, as we can see from the fairy-tales and child-stories in our own and other languages, this attribution of motherhood to all things animate and inanimate is common, as it is in the folk-lore and mythology of the adult members of primitive races now existing.

Mother Poet.

The arts of poetry, music, dancing, according to classic mythology, were presided over by nine goddesses, or Muses, daughters of Mnemosyne, goddess of memory,

"Muse-mother," as Mrs. Browning terms her. The history of woman as a poet has yet to be written, but to her in the early ages poetry owed much of its development and its beauty. Mr. Vance has remarked that "among many of the lowest races the only love-dances in vogue are those performed by the women" (545a. 4069). And Letourneau considers that "there are good grounds for supposing that women may have especially participated in the creation of the lyric of the erotic kind." Professor Mason, in the course of his remarks upon woman's labour in the world in all ages, says (112. 12):—

"The idea of a *maker*, or creator-of-all-things found no congenial soil in the minds of savage men, who manufactured nothing. But, as the first potters, weavers, house-builders were women, the idea of a divine creator as a moulder, designer, and architect originated with her, or was suggested by her. The three Fates, Clotho, who spins the thread of life; Lachesis, who fixes its prolongation; and Atropos, who cuts this thread with remorseless shears, are necessarily derived from woman's work. The mother-goddess of all peoples, culminating in the apotheosis of the Virgin Mary, is an idea, either originated by women, or devised to satisfy their spiritual cravings."

And we have, besides the goddesses of all mythologies, personifying woman's devotion, beauty, love. What shall we say of that art, highest of all human accomplishments, in the exercise of which men have become almost as gods? The old Greeks called the singer [Greek: poiaetaes], "maker," and perhaps from woman the first poets learned how to worship in noble fashion that great *maker* of all,