

ever richer by his example: the example of a brave man struggling uncomplainingly, through ill-health and pecuniary embarrassment, to the achievement of a stupendous task. He lived in a world in which many great men towered above the ruck of mediocrity. He has left a world in which everyone is clever, and no one is great. Now that he is dead, it seems scarce possible that we can have been contemporaries with so great a man. It is as if some huge *Dinotherium* or *Mastodon* had been found browsing amongst our improved shorthorns. There were giants in those days; and, although we may not predict the surprises that Nature may have in store for us, it seems unlikely that the world will witness the birth of another Spencer till it sees another Shakespeare.

C. M.

Miss Hickman.

The case of Miss Hickman appears a very mysterious one in the light of the facts which have become known. An able, sane, sensible, athletic young woman, in the prime of life, and with no known antecedents of mental disorder, a qualified medical practitioner, holding a temporary hospital appointment, leaves the hospital one summer morning without notice, and is never seen or heard of again until her decomposed body is found, two months afterwards, hidden away in a thicket in Richmond Park. The evidence of suicide was conclusive, and at once an hypothesis is mooted that the responsibility of her position weighed so heavily upon her as to unhinge her mind. On this hypothesis is founded a further thesis concerning the unfitness of women to hold positions of responsibility, and especially their unfitness for the profession of medicine. Whether women are unfit to practise medicine need not be discussed here, but it is as well to point out the fatuity of the hypothesis on which the thesis is grounded. Apart from such instances as those of Queen Victoria and Catherine II, which go to show that certain women, at any rate, are capable of holding positions of responsibility even greater than that of house surgeon to a hospital, there is no evidence that Miss Hickman felt her responsibility unduly. As has often been pointed out in another part of this JOURNAL, we are far too apt to speak of crimes as "motiveless" when all we are justified in saying is

that we cannot discern an adequate motive for them. We have no surety that we know all the facts, and if all the facts were as well known to us as to the actors in these dramas, the probability is that the number of "motiveless" acts would be sensibly diminished. Every one of us has an outer life, known to all our associates, and an inner life, the whole of which is known to ourselves alone, though glimpses of it may be imparted to intimate confidential friends. To those who know our outer life only, many of our acts may, nay must, appear "motiveless," although they may have been done after mature deliberation and consultation with our confidants; and if the whole of the inner life were known, it is probable that the residuum of "motiveless" acts would be very small.

Our excellent contemporary, the *Spectator*, founded upon the case of Miss Hickman a plea for the value of confession; not by any means necessarily to an ecclesiastic, but the relief of the overburdened mind by communication of its woes to a sympathetic hearer. Our experience of the working of the human mind, both in order and in disorder, leads us to agree fully with the suggestion.

"Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break."

If the unfortunate lady, whose fate kept the whole country in anxiety, had had access in the hour of her tribulation to some true and confidential friend, into whose sympathetic ear she could have poured her woes, whatever they were, she would probably be alive now, a healthy, happy, useful member of society. The moral that her unhappy end teaches to us her survivors may be expressed in two words:—Cultivate friendships! We may never need to be extricated from such dire misery as she must have suffered, but who is there that would not be the better, at some time or other, for the services of a good Samaritan who should pour the oil of sympathy into the wounds of fortune?

C. M.

Anti-vivisection.

The case of *Bayliss v. Coleridge* draws attention to the existence in our midst of a considerable class of persons who,