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LIV.—ON THE OBSTACLES TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

THE fact revealed in the census of 1851, and brought into notice by the article on female employment in the "Edinburgh Review" for April, 1859, that two millions of our countrywomen are unmarried and have to maintain themselves, startled every thinking mind in the kingdom, and has done much to effect a change in public opinion, with regard to the expediency of opening fresh fields of labor to the industry of the weaker sex. Until that circumstance became known, benevolent persons were generally of opinion that as married life is the happiest lot for women, so all public plans and arrangements in relation to them should be made solely with a view to their occupying that position, for though it was always apparent that a considerable number of single women existed, and that some experienced difficulty in earning a livelihood, the greatness of their numbers was never suspected, nor was the cause of their difficulties understood. When, however, it was shown that one third of the women of Great Britain were unmarried and unprovided for, except by such means as their own exertions might procure, it was at once perceived that to make all social arrangements on the supposition that women were almost invariably married, and supported by their husbands, was to build on a fallacy, and that these two millions of independent workers, if considered at all, must be regarded as their own "bread-winners."

Frightful accounts of their sufferings were almost at the same time made public. Stories in the newspapers revealed the lowness of the wages paid to needlewomen, and the cruel sufferings from overwork inflicted on milliners' apprentices. Workhouses were found to be overcrowded with able-bodied females, while charities were besieged by women praying to be provided either with employment or bread.

Thus roused, the public feeling began to show itself, and during the last few months many newspapers and periodicals have raised their voices to complain of the overcrowded condition of the few employments open to women, to plead for the enlargement of their

sphere of industry, and to urge that every facility ought to be given to enable them to support themselves.

At last the leading journal itself was touched, and thus gave its fiat.

"We sincerely hope that a new system may be instituted at once, and that we may no longer see women who, like men, must needs turn often to labor for their bread, condemned, unlike men, to the ranks of one miserable and hopeless calling, or left with the single alternative of becoming, according to their positions, either distressed needlewomen or distressed governesses."—"Times," November 8th, 1859. The point, therefore, may be considered as decided that there is a deficiency of employment for women; that this deficiency is a serious evil; and that it is desirable to institute a new system by which the evil may be remedied.

The points, then, which it now concerns us to consider, are, in what the impediments consist which oppose themselves to the more general employment of women, and in what manner they can be the most expeditiously and effectually overcome. For this object the best plan will, perhaps, be to take each department of industry upon which women are now endeavoring to enter, by itself, and discuss the obstacles that lie in their path. We will begin with such employments as are interesting to the class of workers who stand highest in the social scale, and to whose fate attention has lately been drawn by the paper read at Bradford by Miss Bessie Parkes, and afterwards published and favorably commented on by the "Times" and various other newspapers. The ranks of the army of governesses are generally recruited from the upper division of the middle classes of society, though many belong to an inferior grade. Ladies who enter upon this occupation are not unfrequently the daughters of professional men, naval officers, and poor clergymen, but a very considerable number are also the daughters of tradesmen. Neither is there any doubt that far too many enter on the profession; that they compete with each other, undersell each other, and thus bring down their own value, till the salaries are reduced to a rate which renders it quite impossible for a person receiving only average pay to dress herself neatly, and at the same time lay by a provision for her old age. The only remedy for this state of things is to find some fresh occupation for the numbers of middle-class women who are obliged to earn their bread, and the occupation must be of a nature requiring intelligence rather than bodily strength.

The employments which most readily suggest themselves, are clerkships of various kinds. Women might be copying clerks in law offices, and clerks in banks; post-office clerks they sometimes are, but they might be thus employed far more frequently than is now the case. There is also another employment for which women would be eminently suitable. Many of the smaller shopkeepers in London, and probably in the country also, are unable to manage

their own accounts or keep their books, the money they receive and expend is roughly written down, and once a month a regular accountant comes who examines into the details, strikes the balance, and sets everything to rights. Now, this is a profession that women could enter without the smallest inconvenience, and by which a considerable number could be comfortably supported.

When a tradesman has no son, it would surely be far better that he should bring up his daughters to succeed him in the business, than train them to the hopeless profession of a governess; for the large millinery establishments carried on by women show that, when properly taught, they are capable of conducting mercantile affairs. The obstacles to this social change are of two kinds; imaginary ones proceeding from prejudice, and those which are of a solid nature. An imaginary one is the impression that no profession is genteel but that of teaching, and that a woman would lose caste who employed herself in any other manner. Small account should be made of this however; for prejudices will never long withstand the money test. If women found they could gain a comfortable subsistence in an ungenteel manner, they would soon abandon their fanciful gentility.

Another obstacle is the impression that women are so intellectually inferior to men, that they would be incapable of performing the duties of such offices in a satisfactory manner. Now this prejudice, like the former, would not long withstand the money test. If employers found that they could get female clerks to do their work as well as men, and at a cheaper rate, they would soon employ them in preference.

But the question is, could women be found who could fulfil these duties in a satisfactory manner, and if not, what is the reason? Does it proceed from the hopeless and irremediable cause of natural stupidity, or is it the badness of their education which occasions their incapacity? It is my belief that only a very few and exceptional women could *at present* be found who would be capable of performing the ordinary duties of a clerk. A gentleman who spoke on this subject at the meeting of the National Association for Promoting Social Science, at Bradford, stated, that being anxious to make his daughters good arithmeticians, he directed their governesses to instruct them in the science, but received an answer from several in succession that, if he wished the young ladies to learn the rule of three, he must employ a tutor. None of these teachers, therefore, could have given satisfaction as accountants. In ladies' schools a master is invariably employed to instruct the pupils in arithmetic; now why should the schoolmistress put herself to this extra expense if it were not for the fact that none of the female teachers in the house understand it? It appears from these facts, that although a few women of the middle ranks might now doubtless be found capable of acting as accountants, yet that the number of them is very small. The deficiency in point of grammar is almost as great

as in regard to arithmetic. The writer knows a person who had passed two years as teacher in a school intended to prepare girls for governesses, who yet could not be trusted to write an ordinary business letter, on account of the frequent grammatical errors she committed; and as it is reasonable to suppose that her pupils were no better instructed than herself, we may conclude that none of them could take a situation as corresponding clerk. It is easy, however, to find a test by which this last point may be ascertained. Let any good grammarian request his children's governess to parse a sentence out of a book, and her manner of doing it will at once prove her capabilities.

Let us now examine whether this ignorance proceeds from imbecility, or is the result of inferior instruction. It is the general opinion of schoolmasters who teach boys and girls in classes together, that the girls are the quickest at calculation, which does not look like natural inferiority; and abroad, both in France and parts of Germany, women are commonly employed as cashiers in shops, and as ticket clerks at small railway stations. French governesses, too, will almost always be found capable of explaining the rules of their own language, thus surely showing that there is no peculiar inaptitude in the female mind for understanding grammar and accounts, but simply that English women are not taught them properly. We think, then, that it may be fairly concluded that the one great and serious impediment to the general employment of women in situations requiring education and intelligence, is the general inferiority of the instruction they receive. Their great misfortune is that they are given no special training. This is not the case with men. If a boy has to earn his own living, he is educated for a profession or a trade. At fourteen a lad must decide whether he will be a sailor or an artilleryman, that he may receive the requisite instruction. A man who intends to enter the medical profession must study for three years. Very few men who have been educated for one profession are capable of turning to any other. A few of remarkable energy and talent have done so; but, as a general rule, a man must go on as he has begun. A man who has been educated for the church would not make a good merchant's clerk, and a first-rate lawyer would be puzzled to explain the accounts of a bank; while those who have received what is called a general education are usually found incapable of any profession or employment whatever.

Now this kind of teaching, which with men is the exception, is with women the rule. The education they receive is *invariably general.* With regard to the daughters of the aristocracy and of the more wealthy portion of the middle classes, it is perfectly just and reasonable that it should be so; for they are provided for, and will never have to struggle for bread. The object of their education is, as it ought to be, to render them agreeable and intelligent members of society, and a slight acquaintance with several subjects will tend to produce this effect far more than a thorough knowledge of a few.

But a rule which is perfectly right applied to one class, becomes injudicious, and even cruel, when extended to all.

We dwell on this point because we fear the anxiety to employ women is now so great, that benevolent men will give them occupation under the impression that persons who have received the ordinary education of a governess, and are considered qualified to teach, will be capable of any other employment which requires intelligence. The experiment thus tried is sure to fail: then the reaction will come, and we shall be told that attempts have been made to employ them, but that they proved unequal to their duties, and that, in fact, the female mind is so volatile, or so obtuse, or so something or other, as to be totally incapable of performing ordinary business transactions: and thus the very impression we seek to diminish will be strengthened tenfold.

There certainly now exist a small number of women who are capable of transacting business, a few have been fortunate enough to receive by some accident a boy's education, and some women of ability have taught themselves a considerable amount of practical knowledge; and if an employer be lucky enough to light on one of these, she will be sure to give satisfaction. But the great mass of women are not of this description; and if, by mistake, employment should be given to one who has received only the ordinary amount of education bestowed on governesses, let her employer on dismissing her say to himself, not that she has failed because she is a woman, but that unpractically educated people are incapable of practical work. If we would lessen the numbers now pressing into the already overcrowded profession of teaching, and enable women of the middle ranks to engage in other spheres of remunerative employment, our first step must be to provide them with a more practical education.

If we seek to discover the best means of so doing, we cannot do better than observe the method pursued to afford their brothers the means of earning their livelihood, and follow the same plan. There is scarcely a considerable town in England which does not possess its endowed school, where the sons of little tradespeople are provided with an excellent education at a rate considerably below cost price. In one which is about to be built, day scholars will be taught "the principles of the Christian religion, reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, history, English literature and composition, the Latin, Greek, and French languages, the principles of natural philosophy, mathematics and algebra, and also such other arts and sciences as may seem from time to time expedient to the trustees," for four pounds a year, and boarders from a distance will be received for twenty pounds; and the whole country is full of other institutions of a similar description. These schools have a double effect; not only are the boys taught in them well educated, but they tend to raise the tone of education generally. The master of a private school must be able to offer yet greater advantages if

he hope to compete against the good teaching and low price of these foundation schools.

With girls' schools there is no competition of this sort, nothing to raise the level of education. The only choice offered to parents of the same class for the education of their daughters lies between Miss Jones's establishment, where the course of education consists in playing on the pianoforte, working in worsteds and doing crochet, and the seminary for young ladies kept by Miss Robinson, where dancing, deportment, and flower painting are the order of the day.

Endowed middle-class schools for girls, under proper inspection, ought to be established in every large town in England. Their absence is one of the great deficiencies of the age. Of course, the founding of them must be a work of time, expense, and individual effort; but what great work was ever executed without an outlay of time, money, and individual effort?

There is a means, however, by which perhaps large sums of money might be procured for the purpose, which should not be neglected. It often happens that when charities are reformed a large amount of property falls into the hands of the Charity Commissioners, who, with the consent of the Court of Chancery, may dispose of it as they think proper. At present these funds are frequently employed in founding middle-class schools for boys only, but perhaps if public attention were called to the subject half the money might be procured for the girls; indeed, if the rules of justice were observed, the whole of the funds thus produced in the next twenty years would be bestowed on them exclusively, to make up for the undue partiality hitherto shown to boys.

Schools of this sort once established, the instruction given in them ought to be of such a character as would fit the pupils for future life. Those who have any talent for music should be trained as organists, a profession well suited to women: some should be taught French, often useful in commercial transactions; all ought to receive a solid English education, and be especially taught arithmetic, book-keeping, and every branch of accounts. They should also be taught, as much as possible, the meaning of business terms, be shown the proper forms of letter writing, and be given every kind of useful practical knowledge of that sort. By this description of teaching, the character of girls of the middle class would be changed. They are now taught accomplishments, and told that the great object in life is to please; they therefore naturally grow up vain, and often think of little else than how to make themselves attractive by means of smart clothes and an affectation of fine lady manners.

But set before them that the great object in life is to earn their own living, that many among them will not marry, and must either work or trust to charity for bread; teach them above all, that it is more honorable to depend on their own exertions than to marry for the sake of a maintenance, and then a different spirit will arise among them.

Women thus educated will be able to find ample employment if they remain single, and if they marry will become real helpmates to their husbands instead of the heavy useless burdens they now too often are, unable to keep the accounts of their husbands' shops, or even of their own households, and not possessing sufficient intelligence to find pleasure in anything, but buying and exhibiting their handsome dresses.

If young women of the trading classes were thus enabled to become clerks and accountants, and to take part in commercial business, the number of candidates for places as governesses would be much diminished, and would consist principally of ladies who had known better days, and of the daughters of the clergy and professional men left without fortunes; and as the competition would diminish with the numbers seeking engagèments, these could ask sufficiently high salaries to enable them to live in tolerable comfort during their old age, without being beholden to charity; and being principally gentlewomen by birth and manners, the unfavorable impressions now existing against governesses would gradually fade away. The profession would rise in public estimation, and those following it would receive the respect and consideration due to them.

We will now proceed to the next branch of our subject, the overworked dressmaker and distressed needlewoman.

Gentlemen sometimes wonder why women submit so quietly to the ill-usage inflicted on them by their employers, and why, when they find they are required to sit for sixteen or eighteen hours a day at their needles, they do not leave their service, and go and seek for work elsewhere.

The reason is simply that if they did so they could not find it. It is the old story; the supply of labor is greater than the demand, and therefore the employed are at the mercy of the employer. The milliner, outfitter, or slopseller, who the most grinds down his workwomen can afford to undersell the others, and so makes a fortune.

It is a competitive school for cruelty on a grand scale: the most cruel wins the prize, and grows rich first; the most merciful is undersold and ruined. The only hope of protecting the employed from the effects of this system is to provide those who want work with other occupations, so as to cause the value of female labor to rise in the market. The question then is, Are there any employments suitable to women of the lower classes from which they are now debarred by ignorance, prejudice, and other causes? There are many. Thousands of women might be employed to wait in shops where light articles of female attire are sold; and there are departments of industry, such as clerkships in post-offices, savings-banks, railway-ticket offices, and others too numerous to mention, for which nothing is required to fit hundreds of them but a moderate amount of education. Thousands more might be employed as watchmakers,

workers in jewellery, and painters of porcelain, if they were not prevented by causes to which we will refer hereafter.

Let us consider separately the impediments to each sphere of industry.

The employment which presents the widest prospect of remunerative occupation for women is perhaps that of saleswomen in shops; for it was remarked by Lord Shaftesbury, at Bradford, that no less than thirty thousand men are employed in the sale of various articles of millinery. The principal objections urged against the substitution of women are:—

First, that they cannot stand the requisite number of hours; the answer to which is, that thousands of them now stand working in manufactories for ten hours a day.

Secondly, that ladies dislike being waited on by women. The proverbial difficulty of proving a negative renders it almost impossible to show that this impression is a delusion. Ladies, however, know that provided they are well attended to, they are generally indifferent who waits on them; and that though some may prefer the services of men, yet their numbers are more than counterbalanced by those who have a special dislike to them. Let every man inquire of his own family and acquaintance what the feeling on this subject is, and draw his own conclusions from the answers he receives.

The third objection is, that in the fashionable parts of the town it would be impossible for shopkeepers to provide lodging-houses for their saleswomen sufficiently near their establishments, and that these, if left to seek their own lodgings, would be so little under control that it would be difficult to insure the respectability of their conduct. There is some show of reason in this objection, though we do not think it a really solid one; for the question is not whether a saleswoman is absolutely and positively certain to be respectable, but whether a girl who is provided with her meals and receives thirty or forty pounds a year salary, but has to seek her own lodgings and is under little supervision, is more or less likely to conduct herself well, than the same girl receiving fivepence a day as needlewoman, and having equally to provide her own lodgings, and be under no supervision at all?

The girls already exist and lodge somewhere; and who can doubt that they are more likely to behave well and steadily if provided with remunerative employment than if left to pine on a wretched pittance that will barely maintain life. The same reasoning applies to every department of industry for women; in every path there is danger, but the greatest danger of all lies in extreme poverty.

The real impediment to their employment in shops is their ignorance of accounts. Few women of the lower classes can do accounts quickly and accurately. In many schools girls are made to sit down to their needles while the boys learn arithmetic. In others, where the funds will not allow of the employment of both a certifi-

cated master and mistress, a master only is engaged; and as there is no rule of the Council of Education compelling the managers of schools thus situated to teach the girls together with the boys, the former are frequently made over to some poor creature who can be had cheap, and who can only read, write, and sew; or whose arithmetic, if she profess to teach it, is so imperfect as to be merely nominal. The natural result of this plan is, that thirty thousand men are employed to sell ribbons, laces, and other articles of millinery, while our streets are full of starving women who cannot find employment, and so long as this system of education is pursued the same results must inevitably ensue.

Last winter, a district visitor in a London parish found a respectable girl just recovering from illness in a lodging-house: she had been a seamstress, had caught a fever, and spent all her money. The mistress of the lodgings had kept her as long as she could afford, but was now about to turn her out. The visitor asked the girl what she meant to do; would she return to her old life of sewing? "No," she replied, "it had made her ill; if she returned to it she must die." Well, had she any plans; how did she mean to live? After a pause, the girl said she thought she should beg in the streets. The visitor took care of her, and got her a place in a shop. She was slow and ignorant at first; but the people of the shop were patient and merciful, and she is now doing well. It cannot be expected, however, that many tradesmen will be equally benevolent, and risk injuring their custom by employing incompetent persons to wait; therefore, if we wish women to be employed behind the counter, we must establish in every quarter of London, and in all country towns, evening classes for young women and girls, where they may learn arithmetic and book-keeping, and where those pupils who become proficient may procure certificates of competency. If this is done they will be enabled when their sewing trade fails, as fail it shortly will, not only to become saleswomen and cashiers, but to engage in other occupations enumerated before, where intelligence is required rather than strength.* We have said that the sewing trade will shortly fail, bad as it is now, it will soon be worse. In fact, ere long it will cease to be a trade at all, for everywhere the sewing machine is superseding human fingers; the few seamstresses who will retain their places will be kept to tend the machine, not to do the sewing. These machines can execute every kind of work, except perhaps elaborate trimmings, not only as well, but far better than women; they can sew shoes, gloves, gown bodies, and shirts, and make every description of under-clothing with wonderful despatch and neatness. We have seen a small one doing in two minutes as much work as an expert needlewoman could execute in ten: it is

* A society whose object is the establishment of such classes has recently been formed, in connection with the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, the office of which, where further particulars may be ascertained, is at 19, Langham Place.

said that some larger ones can perform the work of twelve seamstresses. Let us suppose, however, that an average machine can do the work of five only, then four will be thrown out of work when their use becomes general. It is said, however, that as the cost of making clothes will be lessened by the use of the machine more will be bought, so that the same number of people will in the end be employed; and the example of the power-loom (which threw large numbers of weavers out of work at first, but which was the ultimate cause of many more being employed) is quoted to show that the distress occasioned by the sewing machine will only be temporary. The cases, however, are widely different. A great part of the value of woven manufactures consisted in the labor bestowed on them, so that by diminishing the expense in that particular the price was materially reduced, and people were enabled to purchase a much larger quantity. But in the present instance this is not so. A *very* small part of the expense of a silk dress consists in the labor of making it up. Perhaps the wages of the milliner's girl who makes up a dress worth five pounds may be five shillings. Now let this be deducted from the total of the account, so that the work shall cost absolutely nothing; yet it will not encourage ladies to buy more gowns, for the diminution of price is fractional. Neither in coarser materials will any considerable saving in price be effected; yet, unless the reduction be so great as to induce the entire population to buy five times as much clothing as they do at present, numbers of women must be permanently deprived of employment.

And this calculation is founded on the supposition that the machines will never improve, but will remain doing on an average the work of five women a day; though in reality it is probable they will soon work at a much faster rate. The distress thus caused will spread into the country. In many small towns five or six dressmakers have contrived to earn a living; but now the first one among them who can collect capital enough to buy a machine will be able not only to undersell the others, but to excel them in the beauty of the work done; and thus collecting the whole of their custom to herself, can drive them out of the trade. Then unless they are sufficiently educated to turn to some other profession they must either become domestic servants, for which their previous life has unfitted them, or take refuge in the workhouse. We wish to attract attention to these points, because we fear that much valuable time is now often spent in schools in teaching a trade which will shortly become obsolete.

It will always be useful to women to know how to sew, that they may make and mend their own and their children's clothes; but one hour's teaching a day, or two hours three times a week, continued for two or three years, would give them sufficient skill for the purpose. It was perfectly right when sewing was an art by which women could earn a comfortable living, that girls should pass two or three hours a day in learning it; but now the time so

spent would be much more usefully employed in training some to be domestic servants, and in perfecting others in writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping, so as to enable them hereafter to engage in remunerative occupations.*

Another employment which women are now endeavoring to enter is the management of the telegraph. Here they do the business better than men, because of the more undivided attention which they pay to their duties; but considerable inconvenience is found to result from their ignorance of business terms, which causes them to make mistakes in the messages sent. However, a short course of previous instruction easily overcomes this impediment.

The obstacles to their employment in the watch-making and china-painting departments of industry are of quite another nature from those hitherto spoken of. No education is required for these occupations, only manual skill to be acquired by practice. At Geneva, women are employed in watch-making, in preference to men, both on account of the superior delicacy of their touch, and the greater cheapness of their labor, which occasions Swiss watches to be so much less expensive than English ones that several thousands are imported into this country every year. Women, however, cannot be employed in England in this manner, because of the jealousy of their fellow-workmen. If a master were to employ women in any part of the business, the whole of his workmen would strike at once; and as only a very few women are as yet sufficiently skilful to be of use, he could not trust to their services alone, but would be compelled to yield the point and dismiss them. It is hoped, that in course of time, by patience and perseverance, this difficulty may be overcome, but it will, probably, be some years before watch-making can be looked upon as a branch of industry open to English women.†

The impediments to their employment in china-painting in the potteries are somewhat of the same kind. It appears that both men and women are employed in this art, but that the women

* It would be useless to give this high education in workhouse schools as no one can be employed in shops or situations of a like nature, unless they can deposit a small sum of money as a security for honesty, which of course would be impossible for pauper girls, who should therefore be trained to domestic service.

† We have read since writing the above, in the "English Woman's Journal" for December, 1859, page 278, that there is a manufactory at Christchurch, where five hundred women are employed in making the interior chains for chronometers, they are preferred to men on account of their being naturally more dexterous with their fingers, and therefore being found to require less training.

This manufactory has been established more than fifty years, and shows that as women can perform that part of watch-making which is the most difficult, and on the perfection of which the lives of thousands of sailors and passengers depend, that the only impediment to their employment in its other departments is the opposition offered by the workmen, and it also affords a useful hint to watchmakers to set up any future manufactories where they may wish to employ women, *in the country*, where the spirit of combination is less strong.

having excited the jealousy of the men by surpassing them in skilful execution, and consequently earning better wages, were by them forcibly deprived of the maulsticks on which it is necessary to rest the wrist while painting. Thus the women are at once rendered incapable of any fine work, and can only be employed in the coarser kinds of painting. The masters submit to this tyranny, though to their own disadvantage, being probably afraid of a strike or riot if they resist, and the women are forced to yield from the fear of personal violence from their less skilful but heavier-fisted rivals. This story appeared in the "Edinburgh Review" for April, 1859, and it is surprising it did not excite more general indignation. It certainly appears that a strong body of police and an energetic magistrate are all that is required to remedy this glaring injustice. If two or three dozen of the ruffians were sent to prison for six months with hard labor for assaulting the women, the tyranny would probably be put an end to at once.

But the chief obstacle, the monster impediment, to the more general employment of women, in branches of industry which require either skill or education, is the impression that their employment would throw men out of work, and deprive them of their livelihood. From this fear a few benevolent persons, and many who are not benevolent, are induced to oppose themselves to any improvement in the education of girls, and to all measures that might tend to enlarge the sphere of female industry. I shall therefore do my best to answer this objection fully. With regard to educated women, their increased employment need not and would not have the effect of throwing men out of work, because the progress of civilisation is continually opening *fresh* occupations to educated persons; great numbers of women could therefore find employment if they were properly instructed, without displacing one solitary man. To give an instance, a scheme is at this moment under consideration, which if carried out will give remunerative occupation, requiring the smallest possible amount of physical strength, to some hundreds of good accountants. Mr. Sikes, of Huddersfield has drawn up a plan for increasing the number of government savings' banks. He proposes to establish one in connection with every money-order office throughout the kingdom; and it appears that the number of these is two thousand three hundred and sixty. These banks are to receive the smallest sums, and to be open every day, in order to afford the greatest possible facilities for the formation of provident and saving habits.

In places where the post-office clerk is not already fully occupied he will be able to attend to the bank as well as to his other duties; but in many instances this will not be the case, and a new clerk will be required. Now why should not this clerk be a woman?

The objection commonly raised against employing women in any but the most unremunerative offices, viz., that they deprive men of employment, could not be raised here; no man would be turned out

of work by the admittance of women to this department of labor, as all these offices will be freshly created.

If the report be true that Mr. Sikes' scheme has been approved of by the post-office authorities, there can be little doubt that it will be carried through parliament during the next session, and put into execution shortly afterwards; thus affording a good livelihood to perhaps more than a thousand women, without exposing even one man to the smallest inconvenience.

If women were qualified to fill clerkships and other similar situations the effect would be not to diminish the number of men now employed, but merely to prevent male clerks from becoming still more numerous. A father, instead of bringing up both his sons to be clerks and both his daughters to be dressmakers, would train one son and one daughter as clerks, one daughter as dressmaker or governess, and the remaining son would be a carpenter or builder, and perhaps go to the colonies, where workmen of this class are in great demand. Fifty years hence, if England's prosperity continue, there will be twice as many people employed in work which requires intelligence as there are now. Half of these, if the proposed system of education were carried out, would be women, instead of the whole being men as must be the case if the present system of education be maintained; yet no man would have been turned out of work to make place for them. Nor would the number of marriages be at all reduced by this arrangement, as some people fear; for the higher clerkships, to which good salaries are attached, would still be filled by men, as their superior health and strength must always make them preferred and give them the advantage over women, who would only be employed in places where economy was an object and where the clerks do not receive sufficiently high salaries to enable them to marry; for these men either are, or fancy they are, obliged to dress and live like gentlemen, though by birth they have no pretensions to consider themselves such. Thus great numbers of them cannot afford to marry, but remain single all their lives: whereas, if they had been brought up to a manual trade, and had either stayed in England or gone abroad, they would have been able to marry and live comfortably on their wages; for though a carpenter may earn no more than a clerk, yet, not being obliged to live like a gentleman, his money goes much further. He would thereby provide for two women, the wife he married and the female who would occupy his post as clerk, while he himself would lead a happier life, and add to the wealth of the country by his reproductive labor in some handicraft.

There is but one occupation for men which would be swept away, viz., the sale of light articles of female attire in shops, an employment which all will agree is more appropriate to women. Yet even in this instance the men now employed would continue at their posts all their lives, only large numbers of fresh young men would no longer enter the profession every year as at present; none

would enter but those learning the trade with the intention of hereafter keeping a shop themselves. The new shop-assistants in silk-mercers', haberdashers', and lacemen's establishments would therefore be almost exclusively women, so that when the present race of men milliners had died out the genus would have become extinct, without the infliction of the slightest privation on one individual now employed, and with no worse result to the rising male generation than that of compelling them to take a share of those hardships which are now the exclusive portion of their sisters; hardships which, perhaps, would render them less unwilling to enter the service of their country, since, as Sir Archibald Alison observed at the meeting at Glasgow for raising a volunteer corps, "the enlistment of soldiers and sailors is a mere money question." If men can obtain plenty of easy remunerative labor elsewhere they will not enlist, unless the government can afford to pay them higher than private employers.

When a man can choose between selling lace in a comfortable shop and having to endure the hardships of a soldier's or a sailor's life, he naturally prefers the shop. Therefore thirty thousand men milliners exist in England, while their thirty thousand sisters encumber the workhouses! Nor are they to be blamed for this; it is the system that is in fault, not the individuals.

But change our present plan, grant to women the means of a special education, and so raise them to an intellectual equality with men, and give them, as much as the difference in their strength allows, an equal chance of earning their bread, and at once their position will be infinitely improved. If, in additon to this, the powerful protection of the law were extended to those women who are either deprived of their tools or forcibly prevented from working by their male competitors, immense benefit would be conferred on the two millions of our countrywomen who, as the census tells us, are unmarried and have to maintain themselves by their labor, while men would be subjected to no more inconvenience than is necessary to enable us to maintain our national defences without having recourse to the aid of foreign mercenaries.

Granting, however, that this was not the case. Supposing even that there was such a general want of employment both for men and women that whatever was added to the prosperity of one sex must be deducted from that of the other, still the advocates of the "woman's question" would not abandon their ground. They would maintain that it was not just to cast the whole of the suffering thus occasioned on the weaker half of humanity, and that men ought not to shrink from taking their share of the misery. Listen to the exposition of the duty of men towards women given by Mrs. Beecher Stowe, and judge if it be not the true one: "I take it, wherever there is a cross or burden to be borne by one or the other, that the man who is made in the image of God as to strength and endurance should take it upon himself and not lay it upon her who is weaker;

for he is therefore strong, not that he may tyrannise over the weak, but bear their burdens for them."* How great a contrast is there between the spirit of Christianity and the course of conduct too frequently pursued in this our country! "He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry."†

Believing, as we do, that a selfish disregard of the interests of women and a cruel indifference to their sufferings is the great national sin of England, and that all national sins, if unrepented, meet with their punishment sooner or later, I conclude these pages with the expression of an earnest hope that we may repent in time, and that before many years are past our practice in this respect may be found in accordance with the precepts of the religion we profess to obey.

J. B.

LV.—HARRIOT K. HUNT,

A SANITARY REFORMER.

I HAVE been deeply interested and touched by a book sent to me from America, with the love of the unknown author inscribed upon its first page. This book contains the autobiography of a noble-hearted woman who has created for herself a useful and respectable professional position as a sanitary physician in Boston: I use these words, descriptive of her powers, with some hesitation, yet know not how to choose better. Harriot Hunt is not a regularly educated and accredited physician like Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell; her faculty and her success appear to lie in a loving insight into the lives of those who consult her, and a clear-headed recognition and enforcement of Sanitary Law. Not only is the subject of the memoir outside of any regular profession; but the whole book is intensely marked by the nationality of New England. It is American in word and thought and deed to an unparalleled degree; and must be regarded as the product of another nation, akin, yet how different to our own. As such I offer it to our readers in a much abridged form; making Miss Hunt as far as possible tell her own tale.

B. R. P.

HARRIOT Kesia Hunt was born in November, 1805 and was the eldest child of Joab and Kesia Hunt of Boston. In spite of their quaint Puritan names, her parents were members of the Episcopal Church. Mr. Hunt was in the business of eastern navigation; his brother was a sea-captain, and the home associations were of seamen and the sea. Speaking of her own birth, Harriot Hunt thus describes her early home in Boston. "I come now to speak of my birth. The older portion of the inhabitants of the North End can

* "Minister's Wooing." † Isaiah, v., 7.

remember when Lynn Street (now Commercial) was open on one side to the broad waters of the harbor, and when the houses on the right hand from Hanover Street side were not built. Those older people can remember, too, a neat, pleasant little dwelling facing the water, with a garden of flowers all about it. From the windows you could look on the free tossing of the sea tides, with the ships far and near, and the little ferry-boats plying to and fro. Beyond was Chelsea, where the cows where feeding in the green pastures. You could see the beautiful sunsets reflected in the water, kindling its unstable mass into gorgeous color and shifting flame. And in this house, whose surrounding scenery gave it a soft charm,—a house with flowers without, and birds within, and itself the nest of every comfort,—in this house I was born. There had been a preparation for my birth in my mother's life: in her discipline, her activity, and her maturity. She was then thirty-five years of age. Children had been repeatedly offered her for adoption; to each offer she would say, 'If the Lord wills me to sustain that relation, he will give me a child.' The Lord willed it.

"This was their first, and (then) their only child. Congratulations, prayers, and benedictions came in from every quarter. Such was its welcome into life; such the tenderness and joy with which it was received. I often think now at this mature age, that those blessings were not in vain,—were not without a mystic mission. I often think that the incense from those hearts has perfumed my whole existence; that the gratitude of those parents for a living child has impressed me through subtle, and, it may be, undetectable agencies, with a more reverent and awful sense of the great fact we term Life." Three years after was born a second little daughter, the darling and the friend of her sister's whole life, up to the hour in which the book was penned. Just before the birth of this little one, the family had moved to a house close to the grand old colonial mansion described by Cooper in his "Lionel Lincoln." "It was in that Fleet Street home, my sister and myself grew up to youth. As our childish characters developed, and our dispositions unfolded, we were very carefully guarded from temptation. Habits of trust and obedience were thus more easily formed. Our early playmates were chosen with more care—yes, a great deal more care—than is now given to elect a member for Congress. Our hearts were kept enlarged by family needs; and the difference between *wants* and *needs* was wisely taught us. We were not suffered to grow up in ignorance of the distinction between the apparent and the real—What Is and What Seems. Our fingers were kept busy out of school and play hours, aiding the shirt-maker, helping her in the fine stitching, ruffled bosoms, and button-holes. In the making of the latter, even now, I am considered an adept. But with all this work, (which would be accounted a terrible hardship in 1855!) there was always blended a merriment and joy, for our mother managed to make us feel that younger eyes were aiding older ones.

"Taught at home while young by our mother, we received the impress of her mind. The remembrance of sitting on my father's knee at twilight, learning the multiplication table, by the bright light of a wood fire in a Franklin stove flashing softly on the shadows of the cheerful room, comes to me now like an interior illumination. Thus early were formed those domestic loves—those sacred attractions, which in time lead the child to desire to know that Heavenly Parent who guided, blessed, and encouraged the earthly ones. In minds thus prepared, religious obedience has its root. The influence of our childhood's home is felt through life, and gives a quality to our conception of a heavenly home.

"I think again of our little garden, fragrant with the early rose and fleur-de-lis. There, on spring mornings, our mother was seen, as many may remember, training and weeding her choice plants and flowers. The early lettuce and peppergrass on our table spoke of her thrift. How often, while training and weeding in that garden, she must have been reminded of her maternal duties, — of the young 'children like olive plants round about her table!' To such a mind as hers, every flower and plant must have borne spiritual leaves and blossoms, and each one conveyed a lesson. She yielded to those natural teachings in her own quiet, sensible way.

"Time came when we must go to school. My first school days were calculated to impart cheerfulness to my mind. Whoever can look back to childhood, and recall, with gratitude, a good and kind teacher, remembers—no matter what that teacher's name—Mrs. Carter of Friend Street. I am sure all who were her pupils, reading this work, will agree with me in her unfailing suavity, kindness, and tenderness to children.

"Mrs. Carter's was a private school:—we never attended the public schools; they were not then the carefully modelled institutions they now are, and did not bear their present relation to the public. I have my first school bill to Mrs. Carter, dated 1810. Our bills were always carefully preserved by our mother, that we might realise in maturer years the expense of our education.

"Our Christmas family gatherings were doubly joyous. Christmas was the birthday of my only sister; I remember that my childish fancy thought the merry peals preceding it had had much to do with her birth! What an exciting affair to me, was my first school prize for spelling! And also, my medal for proficiency in history! Then came my first essay at letter writing for others. My father's aunt, whose only son had died at the South, wished me to write to his friends for her. I see myself now, sitting down with my slate,—my mother's charge with regard to carefulness in spelling resting upon me. The draught was prepared; I took it to my aunt; it was approved. I copied it on paper. My heart quivered—my life grew great in importance; I had written to a business man, and the letter was to the point! For years afterwards I was my aunt's letter writer; the employment assumed much consequence; it was of great

use to me—a capital discipline—though I sometimes rebelled. My father said he 'never knew money that came in the slave-trade blessed;' and the intricate lawsuits, vexatious delays, and continued disappointments, of the business transaction which occasioned this correspondence, were always referred to by him in connection with the iniquity of its origin."

The good mother also was careful to train her little girls to habits of practical usefulness, for she sent them often to help some connections of the family who were book folders, and entirely dependent on their own exertions. With them the children passed many hours, sharing their labor.

Under such wise and healthy influence Harriot Hunt grew up to womanhood, until in 1827, when she was twenty-two years old, came her first year of individual responsibility; of professional work for pay. The motives which induced this step appear to have been mixed; very earnest are the pages in which she dwells on the idle aimless life of most young women after they leave school. "These admonitions," she says, "are from one who has labored, yes, and dearly loved to labor." At the same time the family were not rich, and her father's health had not been strong. Therefore, in her early womanhood, with all the promise and joyfulness of a happy home around her, Harriot Hunt began to work:—"The felt necessities of my soul urged me to open for myself some path of usefulness. As our house was large for so small a family, my parents gave me a pleasant chamber overlooking the broad blue ocean, and there I opened a school, and became a teacher." The social respectability of the family soon brought pupils to the young mistress. "The secret of whatever has been worthiest in my existence is in my home. My first independent movement—my school—was blessed by my parents. The pleasant room was soon alive with happy childhood, and I tried to profit by the wise tact that had led me along in leading others. The 9th of April, 1827, found me in my school-room with eight pupils, and when the following October came I had twenty-three!" A little further on she observes, how truly, "*It is well to enter on the new path in sunlight.*" But this is what women so seldom do; not till they are driven out in the dark days of necessity, do they usually begin to exercise the slightest forecast as to their own future.

"I had made out my first school-bills for two quarters; I had earned my first money—had tasted the joy of exerting myself for a useful purpose, and my parents had seen my education ultimated in practical life. I pass over many very pleasant and interesting incidents penned in my diary, for I have much to say on other subjects. When I commenced my school, I relinquished the journal to my sister; but it will still aid me in keeping up the sequence of events which now follow in quick succession. Our domestic life lost none of its joys by my stated daily avocation. That avocation but widened our sympathies; it gave us better opportunities to meet the parents

of the children on a higher plane. It also opened to me a rich experience in social life. Many of my former schoolmates at this time had no graver employment than muslin work. Of course, we were still on visiting terms, though I had lost some caste by becoming useful. I was struck at an early period, by the selfish, contemptible indolence they indulged in, as by the lamentable ennui it occasioned. Living on their parents, like parasites, most of them dwindled away and became uninteresting to me. A chasm had yawned between our friendships,—for I was at work—they were at play. Our lives had nothing in common. My school was a grand use to me, for it not only called out gratitude to my parents for the advantages they had given me, but also for the delight and enthusiasm with which I pursued the occupation. I was an enigma to those who had once been school-girls with me. They knew not the magic of usefulness. They often told me—boastingly!—they had 'nothing to do,'—they had 'all their time!'"

But we must not linger too long over these early years, changes were imminent in the quiet Boston family: the first was the father's death in November of the very year in which Harriot had began her school. The widow and her two daughters were thus left "lone women" in the world; but the strong sense which characterised the household now bore good fruit; there was no confusion, no loss, and the elder one "saw more clearly than ever before how much an early training had to do with our lives, in assisting us to meet the emergencies and changes that had come upon us. They opened to me my first consciousness of the great need of women being trained to meet business exigencies." The father had some years before "sent a small adventure to sea for each of his girls;" it had been gradually increasing and now came home. Thus, although Mr. Hunt died at a moment of general mercantile depression, when the navigation business was at the very worst period for profitable settlement, these three women managed to arrange everything in an orderly manner, and to remain in their old house. "I know," says the writer, "we should never have saved our homestead, had we given our affairs in charge to others; and so I speak from experience." They found however great help in the friendship of one true and noble man. "It was Mr. William Parker, the son of the bishop who married our parents," of whom she speaks in terms of the warmest gratitude. A part of the old house was let off to another family, a new school-room built in the garden, and the younger sister opened an infant school. So passed their quiet days for two years; until 1830, the turning point in Harriot Hunt's life.

In this year the younger sister was prostrated by severe illness, and a kind physician of "the good old school" was called in. He was a family friend, and he it was who, when Mr. Hunt had suddenly passed away while attending a masonic meeting, had come himself to break their sorrow to the widow and her daughters. He had always been "good and true" to these three solitary ladies; so when

he tried blisters, mercurial medicines, and leeches on his young friend of two and twenty, she submitted with docile girlish patience, though all the agony and all the remedies brought no relief. Her sufferings were intense, she could not lie down, but was bolstered up in bed, and another doctor being called in to a consultation, her malady was pronounced to be disease of the heart. She was sent into the country, got a little better, came back; got worse, sent for the doctor again, and was attacked with frightful spasms. "Blistering and leeching were now declared to be the only hope, and they were thoroughly tested." Her treatment was certainly "heroic." She lost her voice; and relapse upon relapse strained every nerve of the two poor nurses. At last the doctor satisfied himself that blisters, leeching, and mercury could do nothing, and he then proposed a painful surgical operation; poor loving Harriot could "hardly conceal her horror." The next prescription was prussic acid, four drops three times a day, which frightened her sister as much as the previous remedy had shocked her. "At last, after forty-one weeks of sickness and one hundred and six professional calls, my sister was aroused to more thought on the subject. We talked it over together; she obtained some medical works, and finally she came to the conclusion that her case was not understood. But what were we to do?—was the question. How often has a similar question arisen in families, and the severest trials followed the impossibility of an answer."

The next symptom that came on was a terrible cough; "so severe that it was supposed to be whooping cough, but it was spasmodic. Then came a different train of remedies, all useless and ineffectual." At this time Harriot herself took a severe cold, accompanied by a cough, and Dr. Dixwell dosed her with calomel. "Catching another cold, I suffered severely in my limbs: I remember those pains as though they were yesterday! I remember also my wonder that so simple a malady required such severe treatment. I gave up my school for a week, and we were sick together. My sister had lost all confidence in medicine. She reasoned and argued with the doctor: *his* tactics were to arouse her conscience, and then she would tamely submit to a fresh round of torturing prescriptions." A very kind and clever physician, Dr. Walker, was then called in by the family, to the annoyance of the old practitioner, who for a long time refused to meet him; but he effected no radical improvement; indeed, Harriot Hunt implies that professional etiquette stood in the way of any marked change of treatment. At last, in 1833, two "quacks" came to Boston; a Dr. and Mrs. Mott, English people; and Harriot Hunt, in despairing desperation at three years of regular doctors and doctors' bills, set off to see Mrs. Mott, amidst all sorts of opposition from friends and acquaintance. "But we were weary and tired out with 'regulars,' and it did not occur to us that to die under regular practice, and with medical etiquette, was better than in any other way." Now we heartily hope our readers will not suspect us of favoring quacks, or at least quack medicines, which are a degree

worse than the inordinate use of the regular medicines which the best physicians are gradually learning in great measure to discard; but the story here set down is that Augusta Hunt, coming under the care of Mrs. Mott, did begin to improve. "Even conversing with a new mind awakened hope, and it is often in this way rather than by a change of treatment that invalids are benefitted." "She began to gain strength. After an absence of three years and four months she again went to church. This was new life for us." The reader indulges in a shrewd guess that the leaving off of blisters, leeches, mercury, and prussic acid, may have chiefly contributed to this end. "Her first long walk was to the residence of Dr. Dixwell, in Somerset Street, to pay her bill."

Harriot Hunt now took a very extraordinary resolution: to study medicine herself, or rather to study the laws of hygiene, the conditions of life and death among women especially, and to enforce their observance professionally. She was heartsick at the old-fashioned practice of medicine, as she had witnessed it tried on a beloved sister, and as many of our readers can well remember it tried on themselves some twenty or thirty years ago, before the innovations introduced by the water cure, by homœopathy, by the spread of sanitary knowledge, had materially affected the ancient regime. Any unprofessional man or woman can judge how great is the change, by merely comparing the treatment he or she received when a child and the treatment which he or she would receive now in a case of severe illness, particularly in fever or in infectious disorders. Such patients used to be covered up closely with many blankets, in a room whose windows were always hermetically sealed, and where a hot fire burned night and day. The problem *now* with the best doctors and nurses is how to secure as free a current of air as possible, without chilling the sick person; and the windows are frequently opened near his bed, even in winter, due precautions being taken to shield him from draught. Miss Nightingale observes, in her lately published "Notes upon Nursing:"—

"We must not forget what, in ordinary language, is called 'Infection;'—a thing of which people are generally so afraid that they frequently follow the very practice in regard to it which they ought to avoid. Nothing used to be considered so infectious or contagious as small-pox; and people not very long ago used to cover up patients with heavy bed clothes, while they kept up large fires and shut the windows. Small-pox, of course, under this *régime*, is very 'infectious.' People are somewhat wiser now in their management of this disease. They have ventured to cover the patients lightly and to keep the windows open; and we hear much less of the 'infection,' of small-pox than we used to do. But do people in our days act with more wisdom on the subject of 'infection' in fevers—scarlet fever, measles, etc.—than their forefathers did with small-pox? * * * True nursing ignores infection, except to prevent it. Cleanliness, and fresh air from open windows, with unremitting attention to the patient,

are the only defence a true nurse either asks or needs. Wise and humane management of the patient is the best safeguard against infection."

Again, how completely is blood-letting going out of fashion; in the last century it was a common practice among healthy people to be bled twice a year, in spring and autumn, as a precaution against possible disease! The withdrawal of healthy blood, or of any blood, when it is not a case of absolute necessity, is now considered the most cruel and most irremediable of injuries to the constitution. We could hardly now hear of a lady who had been "cupped over every inch of her." Again, the excessive use of drugs, nay, the use of any drugs that are not positively necessary, is passing away from the most enlightened medical practice; yet we can all remember when the atrocious black draught, the poisonous mercury, the deadly narcotic, formed heavy items in a heavy bill at each recurring Christmas, and that when the household consisted mainly of little delicate children.

That very much yet remains to be done, that the old notions and the old practices lurk yet amongst us in innumerable holes and corners unswept by the wholesome breath of sanitary knowledge, is too true; but, knowing how much has been effected, let us sympathise with this one courageous woman, who nearly thirty years ago took warning by bitter personal experience, and set herself to work to see if there were not laws of life and health supreme over us all, by obedience to which sickly and useless women could be restored to their natural spheres of duty.

Her sister Augusta joined in her plan: the ages of the two were respectively thirty and twenty-seven: they were well known and respected in Boston, came of an honorable family, and had fair outward conditions for work "Deeper consciousness of the purpose of life now took possession of us; we continued our medical studies with unabated zeal. Our previous experience was of great use. Medical treatment, rather than an investigation of hygienic laws, had heretofore been our lesson. Medication we had seen rather too much of. General and special anatomy—shall I ever forgive the Harvard Medical College for depriving me of a thorough knowledge of that science, a knowledge only to be gained by witnessing dissections in connection with close study and able lectures? Physiology, with all its thousand ramifications, had a fascination for me beyond all other branches—use, abuse—cause, effect—beginning and end—all were significant in the light of a science undarkened by technicalities, doubtful assumptions, tedious dissertations, controversies, and contradictions. My mind was greedy of knowledge, the more I investigated the more I was delighted, wonderstruck; and I was often startled by the rays of light that unexpectedly shone during my research. Setting aside medication, we endeavored to trace diseases to violated laws, and learn the science of prevention. That word 'preventive' seemed a great word to me; curative was small beside it."

Our readers will notice an allusion to Harvard College, and though it refers to a time of much later date, we will take this opportunity of saying that Harriot Hunt applied for admission to the medical lectures held there: on the first application she was refused; on the second, in 1851, the subject of medical education for women had gained much ground with the public, and the authorities consented to receive her; but the excitement of the gentlemen students was so great that Miss Hunt wisely and quietly consented to withdraw. We lay great stress on this incident, as proving that she wished to obtain regular medical instruction, that she had none of the spirit of the quack about her, and that the irregularity of her professional education was beyond her own control. When she first began her work in 1835, she would have been considered preposterously absurd even to make an application to be received into any college or classes; all she could do was to read and observe on her own responsibility, and to discard "blisters, leeches, and mercury."

It was in October, 1835, that the two sisters began a professional life. Their old mother was then sixty-five years of age, "clear and bright, and as ever watchful over her children." "Then we commenced a life fraught with absorbing interest; grasping the past to apply it to the present, and prospectively looking to the future. I remember vividly the earnestness, the enthusiasm, with which we received our first patients. To be sure they came along very slowly, but every case that *did* come was a new revelation, a new wonder, a new study *in* itself and *by* itself. Reverence for the human organisation had much to do with my medical life; and I found myself questioning cases of dyspepsia, liver complaint, and many others, begging them to tell me why they had imposed these drawbacks on health and life; and they did tell me of fearful abuses through ignorance, passion, luxury, and vice. Were not my cases guides and mentors? We studied with unwearying zeal. When our mother was sweetly asleep, we were reciting our lessons to each other, investigating every case that had been presented to us through the day, often thankful that we had declined cases (and numerous were those we did decline) till we were prepared to meet them. My sister being gifted in the use of her pencil, copied plates. Our leisure hours slipped away like moments, with use stamped on every one of them. There was an abiding faith about us, an enthusiasm which surprised many of our tame friends. They could not understand that barren technicalities, freshened by the atmosphere of love, blossomed with beauty for us; or that the diseases of others, with a fervent wish for their removal, gave us mental life." * * * Their friends very naturally thought this new life embodied a very crazy notion. * * * "Had it not been for our mother, how sad would this (the misconception) have been. Her experience of life enabled her to foresee the trials which necessarily attended such an experiment; this was a salutary corrective to my enthusiasm.

"Our business gradually increased. One cure opened the way for other cases, *and an enforcement of dietetic rules, bathing, and so forth, soon placed on a permanently healthy platform those who attended us.*" It stands to reason that Harriot Hunt's honesty and tact must have prevented her in the first instance from accepting cases requiring surgical treatment, or such diseases as had grown beyond the reach of sanitary measures, or she could not have succeeded as she did. But there are few ailments which are not now attacked by the best male physicians with the natural weapons furnished by the laws of health, rather than by the phial and the lancet. "Soon opportunities were offered us to visit country towns. I accepted them cheerfully, my sister remained at home. From these journies I gathered much, so many 'given-up cases' were presented to my notice! also chronic diseases of an aggravated character. *These last were opportunities for friendly relations and examinations, but not cases to be accepted professionally.* My field of observation broadened wonderfully: if hospitals closed their doors to woman, except as patient and nurse, the public were beginning to perceive the inconsistency, nay, injustice of the act. We had, before long, patients from the highly-cultivated, the delicate, and the sensible portions of the community. * * My mother always objected to our practising midwifery: her reasons were satisfactory. In this early stage of woman in the profession there was no physician to speak one encouraging word to us, or to whom we could apply. So alone, unaided by any, we established our own code of laws, and wisely concluded not to visit patients at their homes; for we knew if we did, doctors would say, as we were women, that we were insinuating ourselves into families, and weakening confidence in the faculty. To remain in our house and receive calls was the best opening for the life in this city. The arrangement was productive of much good to physician as well as to patient. Many home-bound, chamber-ridden, used for years to medical calls, would make a desperate effort, saying, 'Live or die, we will go and hear what these strange women have to say to us:' that very resolution was the dawn of light, the beginning of new life to them, *and a fit preparation for obedience to those physical laws which we insisted upon as absolutely necessary to a cure.* Many chronic cases presented themselves; also diseases of children, in curing which my sister always excelled me. Occasionally we visited a patient who was confined to her bed; but we found too often that there was so much opposition to the attendance of a woman as physician among the friends of the invalids, that the good of our visits was neutralised. We knew by experience all about these states of mind, and we respected the sufferer's position.

"We paid the mortgage on our house in Fleet Street at this period. Who could, or would, forget that thrill of joy as with means in hand we entered the residence of William Parker! We had lived carefully, economically, but not meanly; and thus we were enabled to gratify this strong desire.

"Without the influence of my mother's tempered and religious nature my profession would have had dangers for me, it was so startling, so intensely interesting and successful. In ten years after my father's decease our homestead was unfettered and free, and our professional lives respectable to many. Our struggles never seemed hard to us, our labor was so intimately blended with enjoyment; and the struggles made life even more absorbing. By our own efforts we had cancelled the mortgage on our homestead. Our next step was to continue frugal and painstaking, that we might again live in our own house; for our mother so enjoyed our own home that the word 'tenant' grated on her ear as it did on ours."

In 1830 George Combe went to Boston and commenced a course of lectures. His clear and vivid theories upon the body and the brain gave the greatest delight to the two sisters. "My experience confirmed all his teachings; I can never forget them, they stirred the vital palpitating depths within me. I needed a more earnest consciousness of laws, I needed to realise that they govern every department of life, and these lectures supplied my need. * * * After-life proved to me more and more the value of these lectures. His clear exposition of the temperaments and of idiosyncracies, the conviction he forced upon me of the necessity of understanding the quality as well as the quantity of thought, gave me a key which has been constantly and successfully used in my practice, and has been of infinite service to me in the treatment of many obscure cases."

We have thus followed Harriot Hunt from her childhood upwards to the mature and successful exercise of her professional life; a life which still continues in its useful course. In 1840, her sister married the son of an old family friend, and Harriot was left to pursue her work alone; though, says the loving sister, "she was still near at hand; I could still consult with her; her interest was kept alive in looking after and prescribing for the poor and affiicted; but he—her husband—a son to my mother, a brother to me, his relation has been so beautifully sustained that my loss has been gain." In 1847, the mother who had so carefully trained and warmly sympathised with her daughters was taken away; very beautiful are the pages which tell of this loss. The latter half of the volume is full of interesting details on the public movements of New England, on anti-slavery, the temperance cause, and the meetings held in reference to the education and industrial position of women.

We will conclude with an extract from Fredrika Bremer's "Homes of the New World" in which she describes her visit to Miss Hunt, in a letter dated January 1st, 1850. The Swedish authoress says of her hostess, "It is impossible to have a better heart; one more warm for the best interests of mankind, and, upon the whole, more practical sagacity. * * * She has now been in practice twelve years as a physician of women and children, acquiring the public confidence, and laying up property, (as for instance, the house in which she lives, a frugally furnished but excellent house, is her

own,) and aiding, as I heard from many, great numbers of ladies in sickness. In especial has she been a benefactor to the women of the lower working classes, delivering to them also lectures on physiology, which have been attended by hundreds of women. She read them to me; and the first I heard, or rather the introductory lecture, gave me a high idea of the little doctor and her powers of mind, I was really delighted with her, and now, for the first time, fully saw the importance of women devoting themselves to the medical profession. The view she took of the human body and of its value had a thoroughly religious tendency; and when she laid it upon the woman's heart to value her own and her child's physical frame, to understand them aright, to estimate them aright, it was because their destination was lofty—because they are the habitations of the soul and the temples of God. There was an earnestness, a simplicity, and a honesty in her representations, integrity and purity in every word; the style was of the highest class, and these lectures could not but operate powerfully upon every poor human heart, and in particular on the heart of every mother. * * But to return to my little human doctoress, who is not without those sparks of a divine life which prove her to belong to the family of Esculapius. One sees this in her eyes, and hears it in her words. But the round short figure has wholly and entirely an earthly character, and nothing in it indicates the higher ideal life, excepting a pair of small, beautiful, and white hands, as soft as silk, almost too soft, and, as I already said, a glance peculiarly sagacious and penetrating. * * * I saw here various new kinds of people and strangers, because my little doctor has a large circle of acquaintances. Every evening, at the close of the day, she read her Bible aloud, and we had prayers in the old Puritanic style."

But our space fails for more quotation, and we can only recommend those who care for fresh vivid writing, and for curious details and suggestions as to the life and thoughts of our American cousins, to "Glances and Glimpses, or fifty years' social, including twenty years' professional, life."*

LVI.—THE INFLUENCE OF CLASSICAL LITERATURE.

We give these extracts from an excellent paper by Mrs. C. H. Dall, of Boston, Massachusetts.—Eds. E. W. J.

The existing public opinion with regard to woman has been formed by the influence of heathen ages and institutions, kept up by a mistaken study of the classics; a study so pursued that Athens and

* The book from which the above is extracted has never been reprinted in England, but may be ordered through an American bookseller.

Rome, Aristophanes and Juvenal, are more responsible for the popular views of woman, and for the popular mistakes in regard to man's relative position, than anything that has been written later.

This influence pervades all history, and so the study of history becomes in its turn the source of still greater and more specious error, except to a few rare and original minds, whose eccentricities have been pardoned to their genius, but who have never influenced the world to the extent that they have been influenced by it.

The adages or proverbs of all nations are the outgrowths of their first attempts at civilization. They began at a time which knew neither letter paper nor the printing press, and they perpetuate the rudest ideas, such as are every way degrading to womanly virtue. The influence of general literature is impelled by the mingled current. For many centuries it was the outgrowth of male minds only, of such as had been drilled for seven years at least into all the heathenisms of which I speak.

Women, when they first began to work, followed the masculine idea, shared the masculine culture. As a portion of general literature, the novel, as the most popular, exerts the widest sway. No educational influence in this country compares with it; even that of the pulpit looks trivial beside it. There are thousands whom that influence never reaches, hardly one who cannot beg or buy a newspaper, with its story by some "Sylvanus Cobb!"

From the first splash of the Atlantic on a Massachusetts beach to the farthest ground which the weary footsteps of the Mormon women at this moment press; from the shell-bound coast of Florida, hung with garlands of orange and lime, to the cold green waters of Lake Superior, in their fretted chalice of copper and gold,—the novel holds its sway. On the railroad, at the depôt, in the Irish hut, in the Indian lodge, on the steamer and the canal-boat, in the Fifth Avenue palace and the Five Points den of infamy, its shabby livery betrays the work that it is doing.

Until very lately, it has kept faith with history and the classics, but it is passing more and more into the hands of women, of late into the hands of noble and independent women, and there are signs which indicate that it may soon become a potent influence of redemption. It has thus far done infinite harm by drawing false distinctions between the masculine and feminine elements of human nature, and perpetuating, through the influence of genius often *intensifying*, the educational power of a false theory of love and marriage.

Social customs follow in the train of literature; and sometimes in keeping with popular errors, but oftener in stern opposition to them, are the lives and labors of remarkable individuals of both sexes; lives that show, if they show nothing else, how much the resolute endeavor of one noble heart may do towards making real and popular its own convictions.

The influence of newspapers sustains, of course, the general current derived from all these sources.

Public opinion then flows out of these streams; out of classical literature, history, general reading, and the proverbial wisdom of all lands; out of social conventions and customs and newspapers. These streams set one way. Only individual influences remain, to stem their united force.

We must treat of them more at length, and first of the classics. Until very lately there were no proper helps to the study of Egyptian, Greek, or Roman mythology. It was studied by the letter, and made to have more or less meaning according to the teacher who interpreted it. Lemprière had no room for moral deductions or symbolic indications, his columns read like a criminal report in the "New York Herald." The Egyptian mythology was doubtless the mother of the other two. Many of its ceremonies, its symbols, and its idols, must be confused by the uninstructed mind with realities of the very lowest, perhaps we should not be far wrong if we said, of the most revolting stamp. The Greek classics so far as I know them, present a singular mixture of influences, but where woman is concerned, the lowest certainly preponderate. I should be sorry to lose Homer and Eschylus, Herodotus, Thucidydes, and Xenophon from my library; but of poets and dramatists, from the few fragments of Pindar and Anacreon down through the tragic poets,—down, very far down, indeed, to Aristophanes,—can we say as much?

There need be no doubt about Aristophanes. The world would be the purer and all women grateful, if every copy of his works, and every coarse inference from them, could be swept out of existence to-morrow. When we find a *noble picture* in Xenophon, it had a noble original like Panthea in Persia, as old perhaps as that fine saying in the Heetopades which all the younger Veds disown. When we find an *ignoble thought*, it seems to have been born out of his Greek experience. Transported by a fair ideal, Plato asks in his Republic, "Should not this sex, which we condemn to obscure duties, be destined to functions the most noble and elevated?" But it was only to take back the words in his Timœus, and in the midst of a society that refused to let the wife sit at table with the husband, and whose young wives were not "tame" enough to speak to their husbands, if we may believe the words of Xenophon, until after months of marriage. When Iscomachus, the model of an Athenian husband, and the friend of Socrates, asked his wife if she knew whether he had married her for love, "I know nothing," she replied, "but to be faithful to you, and to learn what you teach." He responded by an exhortation on "*staying at home*," which has come down to posterity, and left her, with a kiss, for the saloon of Aspasia! Pindar and Anacreon, even when they find no better representatives than Dr. Wolcott and Tom Moore, still continue to crown the wine cup, and impart a certain grace to unmanly orgies. A late French writer goes so far as to call Euripides a "woman hater, who could not pardon Zeus for having made woman an indispensable agent in the preservation of the species." In his portraits of Iphigenia and

Macaria, Euripides follows his conception of *heroic*, not human nature. They are demi-goddesses, yet how are their white robes stained!

Iphigenia says—

> "More than a thousand women is one man
> Worthy to see the light of day;"

a sentiment which has prevailed ever since.

> "Silence and a chaste reserve
> Is woman's genuine praise, and to remain
> Quiet within the house,"

proceeds Macaria, and still farther—

> "——Of prosperous future could I form
> One cheerful hope?
> A poor forsaken virgin who would deign
> To take in marriage? Who would wish for sons
> From one so wretched? Better then to die
> Than bear such undeservèd miseries."

Here is the popular idea which curses society to-day—no vocation possible to woman if she may not be a wife and bear children: and these are favorable specimens; they show the practical tendencies of the very best of Euripides. The heroic portions are like Miriam's song, and have nothing to do with us and our experiences.

In speaking of Aristophanes I do not speak ignorantly. I know how much students consider themselves indebted to him for details of manners and customs, for political and social hints, for a sort of Dutch school of pen painting.

But if a nation's life be so very vile, if crimes were among its amusements, why permit the record to taint the mind and inflame the imagination of youth? Why put it with our own hands into the desks of those in no way prepared to use it? Would you have wit and humor? Sit down with Douglas Jerrold, or to the genial table spread by our Boston autocrat, and you will have no relish left for the coarse fare of the Athenian. One of the most vulgar assaults ever made upon the movement to elevate woman in this country was made in a respectable quarterly by a Greek scholar. It was sustained by quotations from Aristophanes, and concluded by copious translations from one of his liveliest plays, offered as a specimen of the "riot and misrule" that we ambitious women were ready to inaugurate. Coarser words still our Greek scholar might have taken from the same source to illustrate his theory. He knew very well that the nineteenth century would bear hints, insinuations, sneers, anything but plain speaking. We have limits; he observed them and forbore. Women sometimes talk of Aristophanes as if they had read his plays with pleasure, a thing I can only account for by supposing that they did not take the whole significance of what they read, and this is often the case with men.

When I first took up my pen, knowing well that I should speak of Margaret Fuller's beloved Greeks in a tone somewhat different from hers, I did not know that I should have the sympathy of a

single eminent scholar. It is with no ordinary pleasure then, that I quote these words from the competent pen of Henry Thomas Buckle. "We have only to open the Greek literature," he says, "to see with what airs of superiority, with what serene and lofty contempt, with what mocking and biting scorn, women were treated by that lively and ingenious people, who looked upon them *merely as toys.*"

Alas! we need no prophet to show that what pollutes the mind of youth and lover, by polluting the ideal of society, must soon pollute the mind of maiden and mistress. Is that a Christian country which permits this style of thinking, and how many men of the world accept the stainless virginity of Christ as the world's pattern of highest manliness?

Passing from Greece to Rome, you will see that even as we owe to Roman law, before the time of Justinian, almost all that is obnoxious in the English, retaining still the strange old Latin terms which were applied to our relations in a very barbarous state of society, so we owe to the time of Augustus, to the influence of satirists like Horace and Juvenal, almost all the wide-spread heresies in regard to human nature.

How mean one feels when one throws down these books. One has to get down Dante or Shakspeare to take the taste out of one's mouth.

The views of women are still lower. Cæsar and Cicero may be abstract nullities to our young student, but what can he learn from Ovid? Latin mythology was but the corruption of the older types. What was beauty once, became here undisguised coarseness or noise. The gods who once endured sin, now patronised and made money by it. These things are not without their influence. Above all, low images, witty slang, and sharp satire have force beyond their own, when slowly studied out by the help of the lexicon.

Classical teachers should not be chosen for their learning alone. No Lord Chesterfield should teach manners, but some one whose daily "good morning" is precious. So no coarse, low-minded man should interpret Greek or Roman, but some noble soul, not indifferent to social progress, capable of discriminating, and of letting in a little Christian light upon those pagan times.

Then might the period passed at the Latin school and the college, become of the greatest moral and intellectual use. Then would no graduating students run the risk of hearing from their favorite doctor of divinity, instead of sound scriptural exhortation, some doctrine whisked out of Epicurus, by a clever, but unconscious "leger-de-plume!"

And in leaving this subject to be more fitly pursued by others, we ought to add that mental purity is not enough insisted upon for either sex. It is only by the greatest faithfulness from the beginning in this respect, that we become capable of "touching pitch" at a mature age, in a way to benefit either ourselves or the community. How desirable it is to keep the young eye steadily gazing at the

light till it feels all that is lost in darkness, to keep the atmosphere serene and holy till the necessary conflicts of life begin. For such a dayspring to existence no price could be too high, and if *desirable* to all, it is *essential* to those who inherit degrading tendencies.

We must speak now of history. For the most part, it has been written by men devoid of intentional injustice to the sex, but when a man sits in a certain light he is penetrated by its color, as the false shades in our omnibuses strike the fairest bloom black and blue. If the positive knowledge and Christian candor of the nineteenth century cannot compel Macaulay to confess that he has libelled the name of William Penn, what may be expected of the mistakes occasioned by the ignorance, the inadvertence, or the false theories of the past? Clearly that they also will remain uncorrected.

If men start with the idea that woman is an inferior being, incapable of wide interests, and created for their pleasure alone; if they enact laws and establish customs to sustain these views, if for the most part they shut her into harems, consider her so dangerous that she may not walk the streets without a veil,—they will write history in accordance with such views, and whatever may be the facts, they will be interpreted to suit them. They will dwell upon the lives that their theories explain, they will touch lightly or ignore those that puzzle them. We shall hear a great deal of Cleopatra and Messalina, of the mother of Nero and of Lucretia Borgia, of Catharine de Medicis and Marie Stuart, of the beautiful Gabrielle and Ninon de L'Enclos. They will tell us of bloody Mary and that royal coquette Elizabeth, and possibly of some saints and martyrs, not too grand in stature to wear the straight jacket of their theories.

If they think that purity is required of woman alone, and all license permitted to man, they will value female chastity for the service it does poetry and the state, but never maidenhood devoted to noble uses and conscious of an immortal destiny.

Hypatia of Alexandria, noble and queenly, so queenly that those who did not understand dared not libel her; Hypatia, a woman of intellect so keen and grasping, that she would have been eminent in the nineteenth century, and may be met in the circles of some future sphere, erect and calm, by the side of our own Margaret Fuller; she, who died a stainless virgin, torn in pieces by dogs, because she tried to shelter some wretched Jews from Christian wrath, and could even hold her Neo-Platonism a holier thing than that disgraced Christianity,—what do we know of her? Only the little which the letters of Synesius preserve, only the testimony of a few Christians, fathers of the church *now*, but outlawed *then* by the popular grossness! Yet a pure and fragrant waif from the dark ocean of that past, her name was permitted to float down to us, till Kingsley caught it, and, with the unscrupulousness of the advocate, *stained* it to serve his purpose.

It would have been no matter had not genius set its seal on the

work, and so made it doubtful whether history has any Hypatia left. We must not fail to utter constant protest against such unfairness, and to assert again and again, that not a single weakness or folly attributed to Hypatia by the novelist, neither the worship of Venus Anadyome nor the prospective marriage with the Roman governor, neither the superstitious fears, the ominous self-conceit, nor the half conscious personal ambition, are in the least sustained by the facts of history. She was pure and stainless, let us see to it that such memories are rescued.

What do we know of the women of the age of Augustus? Of the galaxy that spanned the sky of Louis XIV?

Do you remember as you read of those crowds of worthless women what sort of public opinion educated them, what sort of public opinion such histories tend to form? Do you ever ask any questions concerning the men of the same eras, how they employed their time, and what part they took in those games of wanton folly? It is time I think some one did.

In speaking of the court of Charles II, Dr. William Alexander says, in 1799;—"Its *tone* ruined all women, they were either adored as angels, or degraded to brute beasts. The satirists, who immediately arose, despised what they had themselves created, and gave the character to every line that has since been written concerning women," down to the verses of Churchill, and that often quoted, well remembered line of Pope, with which we need not soil our lips.

We may quote here a criticism upon the "Cinq-Mars" of Alfred de Vigny, taken from Lady Morgan's "France." You will find it especially interesting because it bears on what has been suggested of the influence of history, and may be compared with a portion of one of Margaret Fuller's letters, in which she criticises the same work, and makes, in her own way, parallel reflections.

"I dipped also," says Lady Morgan, "into the 'Cinq-Mars' of Alfred de Vigny, a charming production! It gives the best course of practical politics in its exposition of the miseries and vices incidental to the institutions of the middle ages. Behold Richlieu and Louis XIII in the plenitude of their bad passions and unquestioned power, when——

"'Torture interrogates and Pain replies,'

"Behold too, their victims. Urbain, Grandier, De Thou, Cinq-Mars, and the long heart-rending list of worth, genius, and innocence immolated. With such pictures in the hands of the youth of France it is impossible they should retrograde. How different from the works of Louis XV's days, when the Marivaux, Crebillons, and Le Clos wrote for the especial corruption of that society from whose profligacy they borrowed their characters, incidents, and morals. Men would not now dare to name in the presence of virtuous women works which were once in the hands of every female of rank in France; works, which like the novels of Richardson, had the seduction of innocence for their story, and witty libertinism and triumphant villany for their principal features.

"With such a literature it was almost a miracle that one virtuous woman or one honest man was left in the country to create that revolution which was to purify its pestiferous atmosphere. Admirable for its genius, this work is still more so for its honesty."

In the praise given to this new literature is implied the censure passed upon the old. Of direct educational literature we may say that all writers, from Rousseau to Gregory, Fordyce, and the very latest in our own country, have exercised an enervating influence over public opinion, and helped to form the popular estimate of female ability. Rousseau's influence is still powerful. Let me quote from his "Emilius." "Researches into abstract and speculative truths, the principles and axioms of science, in short everything which tends to generalise ideas is out of the province of woman. All her ideas should be directed to the study of men. As to works of genius they are beyond her capacity. She has not precision enough to succeed in accurate science, and physical knowledge belongs to those who are most active and most *inquisitive*."

Alas! for Mary Somerville, Janet Taylor, and Maria Mitchell, as well as for the popular idea that women are a *curious* sex! He goes on:—"Woman should have the skill to incline us to do everything which her sex will not enable her to do of herself. She should learn to penetrate the real sentiments of men, and should have the art to communicate those which are most agreeable to them without *seeming to intend it*."

This sounds somewhat barefaced; but it is the model of all the advice which society is still giving. It is refreshing to catch the first gleam of something better from the author of "Sandford and Merton." "If women," says Mr. Day, "are in general feeble both in body and mind, it arises less from nature than from education. We encourage a vicious indolence and inactivity, which we falsely call delicacy. Instead of hardening their minds by the severer principles of reason and philosophy, we breed them to useless arts which terminate in vanity or sensuality. They are taught nothing but idle postures and foolish accomplishments." Dr. Gregory recommends dissimulation. Dr. Fordyce advises women to increase their power by reserve and coldness! When we hear of the educational restraints still exercised, of the innocent amusements forbidden, the compositions which may be written but not read, lest the young girl might some time become the lecturer, we cannot but feel that the step is not so very long from that time and country to this, and wonder at the folly which still refuses to trust the laws of God to a natural development. It is mortifying too to listen to the silly rhapsodies of Madame de Stäel. "Though Rousseau has endeavored," she says, "to prevent women from interfering in public affairs, and acting a brilliant part in political life, yet, in speaking of them, how much has he done it to *their satisfaction!* If he wished to deprive them of some rights foreign to their sex, how has he for ever asserted for them all those to which it has a claim. What

signifies it," she continues, "that his reason disputes with them for empire, while his heart is still devotedly theirs ?"

What signifies it? It signifies a great deal. It signifies all the difference between life in a solitary seraglio and life with God's world for an inheritance; all the difference between the butterfly and the seraph, between the imprisoned nun and Longfellow's sweet St. Philomel. When we read these words we thank Margaret Fuller for the very criticism which once moved a girlish ire. "De Stäel's name," she wrote, "was not clear of offence, she could not forget the woman in the thought. Sentimental tears often dimmed her eagle glance." What a grateful contrast to all such sentimentalism do we find in Margaret's own sketch of the early life of Miranda.

"This child was early led to feel herself a child of the spirit. She took her place easily in the world of mind. A dignified sense of self-dependence was given as all her portion, and she found it a sure anchor. Her relations with others were fixed with equal security. With both men and women they were noble; affectionate without passion, intellectual without coldness. The world was free to her, and she lived freely in it. Outward adversity came, and inward conflict, but that self-respect had early been awakened, which must always lead at last to an outward security and an inward peace." Here is the great difficulty in the education of woman, to lead her to a point from which she shall naturally develope self-respect, and learn self-help. Old prejudices extinguish her individually, oblige her to renounce the inspiration in herself, and yield to all the weaknesses and wickednesses of man. Look at Chaucer's beau-ideal of a wife in the tale of Griselda, dwindled now into the patient Grissel of modern story. In her a woman is represented as perfect, because she ardently and constantly loved a monster who gained her by guile, and brutally abused her. Put the matter into plain English and see if you would respect such a woman now? No: and therefore is it somewhat sad, that in Tennyson's new Idyll, he must recreate this ideal in the Enid of Geraint, and that out of four pictures of womanly love only one seems human and natural, and that, the guilty love of Guinevere. The recently awakened interest in the position of woman is flooding the country with books relating to her and her sphere. They have, their *very titles* have, an immense educational influence. Let me direct your attention to one published in this city by a leading house last winter, and entitled "Remarkable Women of Different Ages and Nations." Let us read the names of the thirteen women with whose lives it seeks to entertain the public.

Beatrice Cenci, the parricide.
Charlotte Corday, the assassin.
Joanna Southcote, the English prophetess.
Jemima Wilkinson, the American prophetess.
Madame Ursinus, the poisoner.
Madame Göttfried, the poisoner.

Mademoiselle Clairon, the actress.
Harriet Mellon, the actress.
Madame Lenormand, the fortune-teller.
Angelico Kauffman, the artist.
Mary Baker, the impostor.
Pope Joan, the pontiff.
Joan of Arc, the warrior.

Look at the list! Assassins, parricides, and poisoners, fortune-tellers and actresses! Let us hope they will always remain *remarkable!* In this list we have the name of one woman who never lived, and of four, at least, who in this country would owe all their celebrity to the police court, and this while history pants to be delivered of noble lives not known at all, like the women of the House of Montefeltro, or little known, like the pure and heroic wife of Condè, Clemence de Maille. And by what black art, let us ask, are such names as Beatrice and Charlotte Corday, sweet Joan of Arc and dear Angelica Kauffman, a noble woman, whose happiness was wrecked upon a fiendish jest, juggled into this list? As well might you put Brutus who killed great Cæsar, and Lucretia of spotless fame, and Andrea del Sarto who loved a faithless wife, into the same category. The association, although false, helps to educate the popular mind.

Of the power of adages, and that barbaric experience and civilisation of which they are generally the exponent, we might write volumes, but the subject must be dismissed in this connection without a word. We must pass on to consider the force of social instincts and prejudices which underlie this general literature, and are as much stronger than it, as the character of a man is stronger than his intellectual quality. A lecturer once said, "that the first prejudice which women have to encounter, is one which exists before they are born, which leads fathers instinctively to look forward to the birth of sons, and to leave little room in their happy or ambitious schemes for the coming of a daughter." Not long since, a highly educated Englishman told me, that this remark smote him to the heart. "I never expected to have anything but a son," he declared, "and when my little Minnie was born, I had made no preparation for her, I had neither a thought nor a scheme at her service."

Fanny Wright, in some essays published thirty years ago, says, "There are some parents who take one step in duty, and halt at the second. Our sons," they say, "will have to exercise political rights and fill public offices. We must help them to whatever knowledge there is going, and make them as sharp-witted as their neighbours. As for our daughters, they can never be anything, in fact, they are nothing. We give them to their mothers, who will take them to church and dancing school, and with the aid of fine clothes fit them out for the market."

"But," she goes on to say, "let possibilities be what they will, no man has a *right* to calculate on them for his sons. He has only to consider them as human beings, and insure them a full develop-

ment of all the faculties which belong to them as such. So as respects his daughters, he has nothing to do with the injustice of law, nor the absurdities of society. His duty is plain, to train them up as human beings, to seek for them, and with them, all just knowledge. Who among *men* contend best with the difficulties of life and society, the strong-minded or the weak, the wise or the foolish? Who best control and mould opposing circumstances, the educated or the ignorant? What is true of them is true of women also."

In the customs of nations women find the most discouraging educational influences. While with us these customs all set one way, they are easily broken through by the untutored races who still rely on the force of their primal instincts. When Captain Wallis went to see the Queen of Otaheite, a marsh which crossed the way proved a formidable obstacle to the puny Anglo-Saxon. No sooner did the queen perceive it, than taking him up as if he were a meal-bag, she threw him over her shoulder and strode along. Nobody smiled, even Captain Wallis does not appear to have felt mortified. These people were accustomed to the physical strength of their queen. It would be well if civilised nations could imitate them, far enough at least to remember that wherever strength, whether mental or physical, is found, *there* it certainly belongs.

If women were unwise managers of money, a statement frequently made, but which we may safely deny, it would be owing to the custom which has through long ages put the purse in the hands of "their master;" a custom so old that to "husband" one's resources is a phrase which expresses man's pecuniary responsibility, and is always equivalent to locking one's money up. "It will be time enough," says Mrs. Kirkland, "to expect from woman a just economy when she is permitted to distribute a portion of the family resources: witness those proud subscription lists where one reads, Mr. B. twenty dollars, and, just below, Mrs. B. ten dollars; which ten dollars Mrs. B. never saw, and would ask for in vain to distribute for her own pleasure."

And this custom has such educational force, that very liberal men refuse the smallest pecuniary independence to their wives to their very dying day. "The Turk does not lock up his wife with more care than the Christian his strong box. To that lock there is ever but one key, and that the master carries in his pocket. The case is not altered when the wife is about to close her weary eyes in death. She may have earned or inherited the greater part of their common property, but without his consent she cannot bequeath a dollar."

It is the long customs of mankind which stand in the way of educating women to trades and professions. These matters are mainly in woman's own hands. One is glad to see in the English parliament certain statements made in this connection, and others also in a London pamphlet on the nature of municipal government. In reply to the common argument that women ought not to enter certain vocations because they would ultimately find themselves incompetent, it

is stated that in all delicate handicrafts men do the same. Thus, of those who learn to make watches and watchmaker's tools not one-fifth continue in the trade; and in the decoration of that delicate ware called Bohemian glass, by far the greater portion of apprentices give it up on account of natural unfitness. It is the customs of society which sustain the prejudice against literary women. When Dr. Aikin published his "Miscellaneous Pieces," Fox met him in the street. "I particularly admire," said the orator, complimenting him, "your essay on Inconsistency." "That," said Aikin, "is my sister's." "Ah well, I like that on Monastic Institutions." "That is also hers," replied the honest man: and in a tumult of confusion Fox bowed himself away. Had public feeling been right, how gracefully he might have congratulated the brother on his sister's ability, how gladly might that brother have seen her excel himself. This sister was that Mrs. Barbauld who afterward did such womanly service, that we feel tempted to forgive the early fit of sentimentality which found vent in that rhymed nonsense, concluding, "Your best, your sweetest empire is to please."

The manners of men have their educational influence. The quiet turning aside from women when matters of business, politics, or science are discussed; the common saying, "What have women to do with that? let them mind their knitting, or their house affairs;" the short answer when an interested question is asked, "You wouldn't understand it if I told you:" all these depress and enervate, and, even if not *spoken*, the spirit of them animates all social life. "Men are suspicious," wrote Dr. Alexander, in 1790, "that a rational education would open the eyes of women, and prompt them to assert the rights of which they have always been deprived." But education could not be withheld nor eyes closed for ever; therefore the time has come to claim these rights. The Sorbonne is already asked why it confers degrees upon women with one hand, while it quietly locks Margaret Fuller out of Arago's lecture-room with the other. Need we inquire what influence it would have upon society if all literature and scientific opportunities, if all societies devoted to natural history and mathematics, if all colleges and public libraries the world over, were thrown open to woman?

In inferior circles where no leading minds preside it would be as it is now, there would be much idle prating, much foolish delay, much inconsequent discussion, but woman is quick to recognise genius, to listen when wisdom speaks. She chatters to be sure in the presence of fools, but when earnest men come to know the value of her enthusiasm they will never be willing to lose it. When the great door of the scholarly and scientific retreat is once thrown open you will be surprised to see the crowd ready to enter, and when the sexes kindle into intellectual life together many a woman's coals will be modestly laid upon an honored altar, and the flames will rise all the higher because they have been so fed.

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A woman ought to turn like a flash of light from a foul page, a coarse and vulgar word. No wit should ever tempt her to read the one, or repeat the other, and what I say of woman I *mean* of man. I have not two separate moral standards for the sexes.

I have spoken of the formation and character of public opinion as concerns women; in my next paper I shall ask you to consider the modifying influence exerted upon it by eminent individuals of both sexes.

LVII.—THE LADY'S DILEMMA.

"My son is going suddenly to countries far away,
And I must get his shirts cut out, and made without delay,
And get a set of stockings darned, and look to all his clothes,
That everything may be complete and nice before he goes.
Come here, Maria, instantly, and tell me if you know
Of any needle-women here I could engage to sew;
There's not a single day to spare, and therefore you may tell
That I will pay them handsomely, if they will do it well."
"Why, Ma'am, I've heard repeatedly, that not a woman here
Can make a shirt with work that's fit for gentlemen to wear;
I'm sure I don't know where to ask, with any hope to find
A person who can do the work according to your mind."
"It can't be quite so bad as that,—but bring my bonnet down,
And I will go myself and make inquiry in the town."

The lady stopped before a house, and there upon a line
Were children's garments hanging out—trimmed round with crochet fine.
"Maria was mistaken, I thought she could not tell;
For people who do crochet-work, of course can sew as well."
The door was standing open, and there the lady spied
The children's bonnets gaily trimmed with bows and flowers beside;
But lying on the table, and hanging on the chairs,
Were many other articles, that needed great repairs:
The husband's shirt was cobbled up, his stocking heels were out,
And, with a flounced and dirty gown, were lying tossed about.
The lady turned her quickly round, just saying with a sigh,
"If husbands drink, and women beg, I see the reason why."

The next house looked more fortunate, for there were daughters four,
The youngest girl was ten or twelve, the others all were more.
"Oh, here's a nest of workwomen," the lady thought, and smiled;
"And can you make a shirt?" she said, unto the youngest child.

"No, Ma'am," replied the little girl, "but I can crochet do;
And sisters they do broderie and knitting borders too."
"But all your elder girls can work, I'm sure?" the lady said.
The mother looked uneasily, and rather shook her head:—
"Well, Ma'am, they can't do work that's fine, girls are not taught it now;
At school they have so many things to learn besides, you know."
"But needlework should surely take the very foremost place;
To fail in *that*, must ever be a woman's great disgrace."
"Yes, Ma'am, indeed, that's very true, 'tis what I've always thought,
And I can't value many things my children have been taught.
I've always kept my girls to school, to do a mother's part,
And sure enough, there's many things which they can say by heart:
They've lessons in the Grammar rules, and History, and Spheres,
And such a power of learned words, I'm fit to stop my ears;
But still, I'm never quite content about this education,
For all the girls get too genteel to fill a humble station:
They get too proud for servant's work, but few will learn to cook,
And at a place of *all-work* now, they're quite too grand to look.
The ladies' object is not *this*, I'm certain in the schools,
Which makes me think, there may be something wrong about the rules.
By my experience, I should say, a poor man's child should read,
Make out a bill, and write and spell, and sew right well indeed;
Should darn and stitch, work button-holes, and make and mend, you see;
But as to crochet, that may go to Jericho for me.
Of course the maps, and other things, are useful in their place,
But *then* to fail in needlework, that is a sore disgrace."
The mother cast a wistful eye upon her eldest there,
Who wished a lady's-maid to be, or else a milliner.
A flush passed quickly o'er her cheek, a cloud was on her brow:
"Young girls," she said, "were hard to keep from bad companions now."

The lady still pursued the search, and found, where'er she went,
The power to make a *finished* shirt, a rare accomplishment.
At last, she tried another house, that she had heard about,
And here she found a "hand" indeed, a seamstress out and out;
But when she told her pressing need, she learned with great dismay,
That needlework had been bespoke for many a coming day.
'I can assure you, Madam, I refuse it with regret,
But many hands would fail to do the work that I could get.
Now ladies do not work themselves, and poor folks do not learn,
I find it is not difficult my livelihood to earn.
I often wonder how it is, that such a thing could grow,
That only *Fancy* needlework should be in fashion now;
Of course the gentry please themselves, but for a humble station,
I think that needlework stands first in women's education,
To make the most of everything, and in the neatest way,
And earn an honest shilling, too, against a rainy day."

The lady left the seamstress there, with many a sage reflection,
To try the school, submitted to the Government Inspection;
The hum of youthful voices, and the glance of eager eyes,
Have hopeful expectation still, that they were growing wise.
Her heart swelled with emotion, her eyes were filled with tears,
To see these young ones gathering in a store for after years,
To fit them for the toils and cares of working women's lives,
As skilful household servants, or as thrifty workmen's wives.

The school was then in classes of children great and small,
The eldest stood before a map, that hung against the wall;
All eyes were fixed intently, as the pointer flew about,
And darted here, and darted there, to point the places out;
And one might almost smile to see the lady's great surprise,
When children small repeated all the Principalities,
The Duchies, and the Provinces, Danubian and French,
In words almost as accurate as those we gain from Trench;
They told where all the rivers rise that feed the Mississippi,
And where the famous sage was born, the husband of Xantippe.
The lady said, "This surely is an almost useless task."
"The Inspector's coming shortly, Ma'am—we don't know what he'll ask,
And in the maps especially, we wish them to excel;
Lest when he makes report of us, we should not stand so well
As other schools, and thus incur discouragement and blame,
And bring a slur, it may be, on the Governess's name."
The lady felt the reasoning, and turned her to a class
That round a pupil-teacher had arranged itself to parse.
She listened with astonishment, to hear grammarians young
Anatomize the very roots of our fine English tongue;
They marshalled all the parts of Speech, and with no hesitation,
Of every kind of Verb they showed Mood, Tense, and Conjugation.
The lady felt her ignorance, and was afraid to show
To those triumphant, eager eyes, how little ladies know;
So passed, to where another class was then in full display,
And here again she almost felt inclined to run away.
Such miracles in Rule of Three! such mental calculation!
Whilst Billions and Quintillions ran in easy numeration.
But now at last she called to mind, the thing for which she came,
And straight went to the Governess, her business there to name.
Could she have half-a-dozen shirts made by the children there?
About her shirt work, she must say, she was particular.
The mistress looked along the forms, to scan her workers o'er,
But one might read upon her face, she knew they'd not the power.
"We've very few good workers now—our time is very full—
So many other things have been put foremost in the school—
And little interest is felt about the sewing too,
Compared with many other things the children have to do!
The learned Gentlemen who come, with College education,
Of course consider needlework beneath their observation.
But as we gain a grant of books, and money for the schools,
It is our interest of course to carry out their rules.
I wish that ladies *competent* were made Inspectors too,
To give importance to the things that women ought to do;
We should not then be posed to find young people who could sew;
'Tis nothing but encouragement that children want, you know.
And were my own opinion asked, I certainly should say,
The time that's spent in needlework is never thrown away;
But 'tis with that as other things, in order to excel,
There must be time and practice both, before they do it well."

The lady looked at all the work, and sadly shook her head,
She plainly saw that at the school her shirts could not be made.
She went away—what next she did, I need not now relate,
But I have heard it, as a fact, that from that very date,
She reconciled her mind to what she had opposed before,
That we must have machines to sew, now hands can sew no more.

LVIII.—A VILLAGE SKETCH.

It is most probable that the reader has never turned aside to visit the pleasant village of Benniworth. I say turned aside, for nobody ever goes there who does not go on purpose. The village seems to have got out of the way as if preferring not to have remarks passed upon it, for so long ago as half a century, pompous men looked down from the height of the old oscillating coaches, and, if the leafless trees permitted a glimpse of the roofs, would designate it a decayed hamlet! The designation is unjust. Never did a group of habitations more successfully resist decay than that in whose midst stands the dwelling in which I first saw daylight, or candlelight perhaps it was, I forget just now.

Benniworth was in its prime in the days of our good Elizabeth. Then merrie faces looked out from those thatch-hooded windows that glisten in the roofs, and held quaint discourse with passing swains while the gammer gave mete attendaunce in y^{e} butterie, or strove with oddly habited yearlings, who, I suppose, had a preference for unrestrained liberty and uncooked thumb as now and from the beginning.

Now as it is insisted that one essential attribute of enjoyable writing is clearness, I beg distinctly to advertise that I had not a being, and perhaps had not been thought of, when she of famous memory swayed the sceptre of these realms. I never saw half the people whose dust has raised a mound about the ancient church, never saw the venerable dames with kerchiefed chins, wending to worship, or the maidens with petticoats so saucily tucked up behind: but there is a distinct type of interest, I had almost said relationship, subsisting between the dwellers in these sequestered villages. There is an echo awakened by legend and story, second only in interest to that which memory evokes.

The first specimen submitted to my youthful contemplation by the genius of fashion was—let me see,—imagine a pair of tongs with gown made to figure, let imagination also supply scarf and bonnet. Nay, my sister, you who observe the mode in this new year of grace, suppress that smile, for are not all sensible men laughing at *you?* Hopeless as the acquisition of the philosopher's stone, difficult as the discernment of that occult law by which perpetual motion may be regulated and sustained, futile as have hitherto been all attempts to square the circle must be the effort to reconcile fashion and common sense.

And we are degenerating. Is it not so? Place simple, regal Mary Stuart beside Eugénie, and let any man accord the palm of grace. But remark is useless. Expostulation, caricature, nay, the sacrifice of human life itself, fails as a counterpoise to fashion. But I am getting angry. We will return to Benniworth.

I should like to have seen those quaint forms in the sixteenth

century, and to have heard them respond to the psalm in quainter speech. It would be interesting to have lived a year in each of the last twenty centuries, and to have had a nap in the interim, as is said to be possible in the case of a certain animal which I decline to name. I should like to have shaken hands with Boadicea: there is something electric in the grip of a heroine, something which awakens deep slumbering powers, and causes the soul to soar aloft like an unhooded falcon. And I should like to have seen those Druids, how on earth they reared those unseamed temples, and planted that stone forest in Brittany; should like to have spent an evening with my Saxon relations when Boreas' forest harp was unbroken, when the lightning had its liberty and didn't have to go errands for the dressmaker. But if I were to enumerate all the things which I should like to have seen, this paper would be rather inconveniently protracted: besides we came into this world as actors, and not as spectators merely.

The tower of Benniworth church arose in the early part of the thirteenth century. Then it was that those horrid visages at the corners were *new*, and looked thunder and threatening on the innocent villagers. In the mouth of each was stuck what seemed to be a short roll of parchment, from which they must have ejected rain-water with great energy; but somebody or something has long since choked every one of them, and nobody seems to have thought it worth while to examine their leaden throats. If ever they inspired terror, it is a thing of the past, for there the sparrow has found a house and the swallow a nest for herself, even under their very jaws. A mantle of ivy clings lovingly around the venerable structure and nestles on the roof; and the aisles and the old porch are hollowed by the tread of feet, long mouldered. How imposing the scene as now and again the white surplice floats over that mortal mound, and at the head of some newly opened grave is announced the Hope of the Resurrection. There are few scenes which combine more affecting associations than the churchyard of one's native village. At that font the minister took us in his arms for holy-baptism: there, along with a train of youthful companions in caps and tippets white as snow, we knelt for confirmation: and then some of our companions drooped, and we bore them in their white coffins into the church once more, and as the villagers passed us and our burden, they peered on the coffin plate, and their eyes grew filmy as they noted at what stage the flower had been cut down. Not only does memory photograph these early life-scenes, but she preserves the tremulous vibration of the funeral bell which seems as if it could scarcely toll for weeping. Too sacred for note in this connection are other, dearer memories, nor may we dwell longer on mere personal associations.

But apart from these, Benniworth has, I think, some claim to passing notice. I know that the inhabitants are very ignorant people, knowing little of aught else beside their duty towards God and their duty towards their neighbour. I know that the men are heavy and uncouth, that they take large strides and large mouth-

fuls. And I know all about the thatch-like arrangement of their hair, their flaming neckerchiefs, and their waistcoats bedight with glass buttons for church-going. And I know, too, that the women wear muslin caps of ancient pattern, that their shawls last through a whole generation, and that they wear antiquated bonnets and dreadful pattens. And I confess with a feeling of humility that the elderly women are slightly superstitious, and that the maidens do now and then tender their hands to women of doubtful probity and who are distinguished for tawny skins and coal-black hair. Nor, were we to lift the latch and look in upon Sally Holt, who keeps the village school, would matters present a more becoming aspect. I am afraid that the girls wear short petticoats, and that their boots are of masculine sort. And then I doubt (that is, I hope) that their shirts are six weeks in hand, and that half of the cotton is wasted in making see-saws and lip-cherries. And then the boys' pinafores have holes or patches at elbows without exception, and they are half the time unlacing and lacing their boots, and tying handkerchiefs round their legs; to say nothing of leaves set at liberty from bookbinders' thread, and covers dangling on a single hinge.

Ah! but from a group like that went the first volunteer for the forlorn hope at Badajos; and, of course, it soon became ocularly evident that he possessed *brains*. Where is there a hamlet that has not a life to offer at every call of our country? Where one that has not its old soldier with need but for one stocking, or who pins up a superfluous coat-sleeve? From groups like these, too, are gradually emerging brave boys who bare their throats to ocean breezes, finer sailors than whom the sea never rocked in a hammock.

Last—and the last shall be first—Benniworth sent forth a martyr for our holy faith in the days of the merciless Mary; and many other traditions testify to the constancy and patriotism of its sons. Talk of an "evening's entertainment!" Give me a ponderous log, thoroughly dry, and plenty of chimney room. Then let us have the first edition of a sailor's adventures and the twentieth of an old soldier's, then Benniworth's traditions, last of all a good ghost story and faith to believe it: and when all have become delightfully horrified, a little mirth and confusion to drive the faith out of us again. I say give me these things, with plenty of good English cheer, and you are welcome to more fashionable amusement.

There is one feature in connection with the village of Benniworth which it is difficult accurately to render. It is easy to sketch the group of low thatched houses, around which the beck coiled like a silver serpent, and a few other outlying habitations, which seemed to have got entangled among the trees. Perhaps the term "easy-going" will best describe this peculiarity. The trees grew in the most easy and comfortable postures imaginable. Everything had such a self-satisfied, good-neighbourly air, betokening at the same time a fixed determination to look at the bright side of things. The weather-cock on the steeple stood tailward to the north, nor could any

amount of persuasion induce it to look behind. The cows ruminated sleepily on the green sward, and the pigs lay grunting contentedly in their sties, blessedly ignorant of the method of making mince pies. All this was nothing to the assurance with which the poultry strutted: and the cocks crowed as cheerily as though such a lady as Mrs. Rundell had never had an existence.

There occurred, however, once upon a time, a singular exception to this general rule and order of things. Aloof from the humbler cottages stood a dwelling of rather superior pretensions. The numerous chimneys seemed sinking in the roof, for many strata of thatch had accumulated, giving the house a somewhat heavy appearance. This ancient mansion had formerly been occupied by fine old English gentlemen and ladies, who, if the testimony of mural marble be reliable, were, there or thereabouts, perfect in their generation. Now, however, it was in the occupancy of a rare specimen of the English farmer. He was a plain man, and one of those whose age it is difficult to conjecture; he might be forty-five, he might be sixty. If there was one thing that Mr. Cheever loved too well, it was his pipe; if anything that he abhorred above all other things under the sun, it was innovation in any one form or shape. His horses continued gravely hollowing circles in the paddock, while steam thrashing machines were going fussing about the country, and even his flails raised a dust in the old barn by way of reassurance. He regarded patent shakers and patent everything else with infinite disdain, and spent a great deal of his time in wondering whatever people would get next. The same principle was consistently carried out in all domestic affairs. Time had honored, but not deteriorated his furniture. There it was in its good old age, quite respectable, having always kept out of the hands of bawling auctioneers and Bacchanalian orgies. And then Mr. Cheever hated shams. None of your plated goods: his silver was silver, and his brass was brass. His candlesticks were one or the other. None of your new-fangled lamps with their flare and sputter and soot, causing panic in the midst of full-dressed assemblies.

Fortunately for the good man's peace his housekeeper might have been made to order, so fully did she sympathise with all his views. His housekeeper? Yes. Mr. Cheever was a widower. He had one son, or hoped he still had. The youth had chosen a seafaring life to the regret of his worthy father, who, had he not possessed the hopeful disposition peculiar to the Benniworth people, would no doubt have taken it very much to heart. Besides the happy trait before mentioned, Mr. Cheever possessed truly benevolent sympathies. Not that these were ever verbally expressed, but he had a way of drawing out that queer purse of his and handing forth coin without an accompanying look or word. Of course he had many applicants for his charity in the shape of cottagers whose pigs had died from natural causes, or whose poultry had become a prey to some vulpine marauder. But if the whole truth must be told, Mr. C.

was a very obstinate man. As well attempt to turn the rusted weather-cock, or to bend the wind, as try to move him when once he had made up his mind. His yea was yea, and his nay was nay, and when either had gone forth he was absolutely immovable.

This worthy gentleman had a niece, a lady of rather prepossessing appearance, young—well, she was five-and-twenty, perhaps more. Miss Rayner inherited from her father a remarkable talent for spending money, while, like him, she had no idea of turning or making a penny; indeed, the necessity of doing either was shocking to her ideas of gentility. She had been flattered in her day—I speak in the past tense, for her day seemed to have suddenly declined. She had been called "angel," and did not repudiate the appellation. But her father had gone the way of all flesh, and his effects went the way of all effects which minister to the vanity of a man who makes it a point to exceed his means. And then angels terrestrial have peculiar disadvantages. That vulgar thing, appetite, is imperious (this in a whisper). And these unfortunate angels have to do with the landlady. They cannot enter a sumptuous dwelling at will, and poise in mid-air in the best bed-room, and then escape the virago, as the real angel may. All this Miss Rayner found out to her great confusion; and what could she *do?* Work was ungenteel; she would beg: that was humiliating, of course, but it was a little more compatible with ladyism. And so she remembered her "horrid uncle" at Benniworth. There was some slight difficulty in the way, for a feud had long existed between the brothers-in-law, and she had seen this said uncle but once or twice in her life. She had no other resource, however, and so the application was forwarded in due form.

Now Mr. Cheever's pipe was a sort of mental indicator. If the whiffs spin forth lightly as if they were having a holiday, then, all ye cottagers who want new hasps to your pigsties or the loan of master's new swathe rake, come nigh; but if the said whiffs proceed slowly and reluctantly as if they were being sent up the chimney for bad behaviour, well then, better wait a bit, for Mr. Cheever must not be disturbed.

But the farmer was in neither of these moods when the letter of his niece came to hand. He was in perfect balance: his good heart, and it was a good one, was not to be made light of by his judgment, nor his judgment, and that was good too, to be overruled by the dictates of his heart. He read the letter, paper superfine, and superfine everything else. I said he *read* the letter, but this was no light task: on he stumbled, over French phrases and un-make-out-able words, now floundering through a sentimental quotation, and now hanging in doubt over heads and tails of doubtful significance. One thing was clear and only one—she wanted some money. Of course she did not express herself in that vulgar way, but she intimated that her longer existence on this terrestrial ball was "contingent on the immediate remittance of a pecuniary favor."

After refolding the epistle and relighting his pipe, his first reflection was, how strange that so fine a lady should come to ask favors of him; and his second related to the expediency of "bringing up girls according to what they had to look to." Sundry others followed, but are far too commonplace and vulgar for general note. As regarded the petition itself he decided to grant it, but accompanying the favor was a recommendation that his niece should try to "get in *usher* to some family," or in some other way set about getting a living. He "would not say but what he would remember her now and then if she did her best," but failing in that, she must expect no more help from him; he had his own son to look to, and it was his duty to think of him. Miss Rayner was exceedingly indignant at the terms of this communication, nor did she once thank her benefactor in her heart. Like similar characters in similar circumstances she appeared to consider everybody as responsible for her misfortunes, and deemed that no amount of favor could exceed what was their bounden duty.

Necessity pressed and she made a feeble effort to procure an engagement as governess, as, and I note this as being something new under the sun, more than one opportunity *presented itself*. The first party on whom she waited was a lady quite dwarfish in stature, but in other respects a female Falstaff. This lady stated broadly to the indignant applicant, that she "did not wish a tole person," she would prefer a "shoter person." The second situation came quite within reach, but then the family was not genteel and the children had red hair and freckled faces. From very disgust she was compelled to decline.

Again she appealed to her uncle, but he was no longer at command. He had said "Nay." Mr. Cheever was not a man to send money he knew not whither in that way, and he lit his pipe with her urgent letters in the coolest manner possible. He had been good enough to intimate to his niece that if she chose to spend the winter at Benniworth, and "fare in a plain way, she was welcome." But winter in a country village! It was impossible.

We judge by comparison; and Miss Rayner had been comparing winter in a desolate farm house, and winter as she had been used to waste it in famous London town. But by and by the comparison varied to "no dinner and no shelter," and the accommodation she had despised: it was not very surprising therefore that she finally presented herself at the threshold of the great thatched house.

It was the dreariest day imaginable. The wind wailed testily among the trees, whose shivering branches stretched after the hosts of withered leaves which were every moment being swept away. The sky was leaden and gloomy, and there was nothing but the ceaseless patter of rain, which also dripped yellow and dull from the broad eaves of thatch. But it grew calmer towards evening: the murky clouds were being slowly shelved, and the moon and the stars peeped now and then from between some convenient break, by way of assurance.

Mr. Cheever had been sitting for hours, smoking his pipe and caressing his dog, which looked up as if it knew all about the rain being a blessing.

I never said the farmer could not get tired of smoking; and he had had enough of it on that blessed day in all conscience. He felt this, and he somehow felt, too, that he had had enough of silence, enough of solitude, and enough of musing: and when a man has had enough of everything he likes best that is the time when he most wishes for something else. Mr. C. wished for some little thing or other by way of change. Rising to his feet, he stretched himself with an extraordinary inspiration, accompanied by so sudden and startling a sound, that Carlo leaped to his feet in evident apprehension. It was perhaps fortunate for Miss Rayner that she had chosen this day for her advent; a circumstance, by the way, of which Mr. Cheever was unapprised. At this very time the lady was laboring down the almost impassable lane on an ass! a regular big-headed fur-faced ass; and behind was a lad panting beneath her trunk. It is painful to reflect on what her situation might have been but for the accidental encounter with the long-eared steed and its rider.

Most fortunately for herself, Miss Rayner bore a striking resemblance to her late mother, and this circumstance affected and utterly disarmed her stern matter-of-fact uncle. He made no show of reception; but not only the domestics, but the lady herself, perceived that she was no intruder. If, instead of presuming on the good uncle's kindness, she had possessed the least tact, she might have commanded as much of her own way as was good for her, perhaps more. No sooner did she enter the hospitable dwelling than she found herself possessed of a mysterious power, and she resolved to stretch it to its limit. Mr. C. directed that particular care should be observed in airing sheets, blankets, etc., and with his own hands prepared her an after-supper potation, the excellence of which seemed to strike her with surprise. She was agreeably disappointed in the "plain fare" of a farm house, and concluded that if she could only have the binding and loosing of her uncle's purse-strings she might not be so very badly off after all. But absolute wants supplied, artificial ones clamoured for attention. Books are a necessity we admit, and Mr. Cheever had plenty of them, all well bound and in excellent order. But Miss Rayner turned with disgust from divines, historians, and poets. On a side table lay what appeared rather like some monthly numbers familiar to her eye. On these she pounced. The first was an account of the "Conversion and happy death of Sarah Wilson," and the next was a "Remarkable instance of judgment on a blasphemer who was struck dead," etc. Her disgust was irrepressible.

How was the unfortunate lady to spend her time. Visit the poor? Ugh! the only poor person for whose comfort she cared a whit was *herself*. Everything relating to their improvement, which

she had happened to meet with in her reading, was skipped, just as a maiden skips the everlasting queries, "Do you double up your perambulators?" "Why give more?" or any of those which infallibly pose you when you unfold a newspaper, except, perhaps, "Do you want luxuriant hair?" etc. Few paid their respects to the new comer; but among the few was Mr. Crichton, the curate, and his sister, who superintended his domestic affairs, for—he was unmarried. The circle select which Miss Rayner formed, was composed of three or four (if either of those numbers can be formed into a *circle*) respectable individuals; but respectable was a term which she hesitated almost to apply to a young man whose long habit it had been to spend his evenings with Mr. Cheever, or a part of them at least, when disengaged. She hesitated because, although Mr. Harneis was decidedly good-looking and agreeable, and was said to have come of a good family, a branch of which had been disinherited owing to some question of legitimacy, yet he ploughed his own fields, stabled his own horse, and carried his mother's pattens on Sundays. It was only because this young man had a well cultivated mind, and because everybody else admitted him to terms of friendship, if not of perfect equality, that Miss Rayner condescended to him at all. Strange to tell, this young man took a fancy to Miss R. But Miss R. had taken a fancy to the curate, who also had taken a fancy to somebody else. Still, Mr. Harneis helped to pass a dull evening.

When Miss Rayner had been a few weeks at Benniworth, her uncle discovered that the resemblance to his late sister extended only to the features, in all other respects she was utterly dissimilar; besides, she had at length assumed the reins of government, not of his domestic affairs only, but of himself, and he had been unaccustomed to contradiction and interference. He puffed thoughtfully at his pipe—Was he to be controlled in his own house? *No.* Mr. Cheever said no, and the matter was settled. Regardless of expostulation and reproach and tears, the silver, which had been called forth from green baize at her command, had orders to return to its rest, and fine linen, spun by Mr. Cheever's own mother, was laid once more under the lid of the old oaken chest.

About this time his heart was gladdened by news from his son, who was in port, and would be home immediately. Miss Rayner might or might not rejoice at these tidings. Certainly she had become exceedingly irritable. Perhaps one reason might be the unimpressionable heart of the curate, whose intentions even vanity could only deem polite: she *would* subdue him yet, of course she would.

It was a fine day in January, and Mr. Harneis had the assurance to join Miss Rayner in her walk, and, what was more, the lady *felt* that he was actually about to propose; she would reject him, certainly, about that there arose not a second thought. To her extreme mortification she observed the curate approaching! Mr. Crichton

would *see* her in company with Mr. Harneis. The quick eye of the latter gentleman observed her annoyance, and contemptous manner towards himself—he flushed. He had hoped, he said, that his company was not disagreeable, but if he were mistaken he would not annoy her further.

In the vexation of the moment, Miss Rayner replied haughtily, that his "*vanity* had certainly led him into a mistake."

Mr. Harneis bowed with a grace that was native to him, and retired.

Miss Rayner returned to the house in company with Mr. Crichton, between whom and her uncle an interesting conversation instantly opened.

"Heard the news, I suppose?" said Mr. Cheever.

"About the lawsuit, yes," replied the curate. "Why the estate must be worth four thousand a year."

"More," was Mr. Cheever's emphatic reply.

The fact was, a lawsuit that had long been pending had been brought to an issue, and Mr. Harneis had come into the ownership of an estate, whose value was underrated at four thousand a year. His poverty alone had prevented his proposing to Miss Rayner, for he perceived that she was wholly unfit for a poor man's wife. That obstacle removed, he hastened to declare himself, with the result we have detailed.

To crown Miss Rayner's dismay, she received a note from Miss Crichton, on the same evening, congratulatory of her engagement to George Harneis, Esq., for rumour had been telling fibs. Miss C. begged the favor of Miss R.'s company for two or three days, as *her brother was going to Cumberland on a visit to his adored*, but, this was a secret.

Poor Miss Rayner, she had missed her mark.

According to notice, her sailor cousin arrived. He combined the life and action of any six ordinary men, being in himself a perfect storm. If Miss Rayner had ever built a castle in his direction, it toppled over in a moment, for she was frowned on from the first; young Cheever having estimated her unfavorably in comparison with "a brass farthing," "rigging, and learning, and sense, and all," which, of course, was very improper.

Soon after his son's return, Mr. Cheever was seized with apoplexy, which was fatal in its issue, and his niece was compelled to seek a livelihood as best she might. It would be painful to trace her subsequent history through scenes of suffering and privation. There are many such, persons of education as they are called. An educated woman too often means, one whose moral faculties have received no training, but who has been stuffed with false notions of gentility at a boarding school. The difference between these "ladies" and true women, is similar to that which exists between stuffed birds and those which live, and soar, and sing. The former specimen is very elegant indeed, and so are our educated, ignorant ladies, but they are not LIVING.

Poor Miss Rayner, perhaps "more sinned against than sinning," came thus to ruffle the tide of life at Benniworth, but she is gone, and again it flows on peacefully as before.

The village looks just as formerly. Mr. Harneis has built a stately mansion in the vicinity, and has secured, what is better, a suitable wife. Mr. Cheever is married also, and is trying to reconcile himself to "life ashore," but his success is doubtful.

It was a quiet summer afternoon, when last I bade adieu to the dear old place, after visiting the churchyard to see where the farmer lay. The sunbeams slept quietly on the grave, and now and then a tender moan passed over the tombs, as the breeze stirred the old yew trees. Everything seemed reposing under the quiet expanse of silver rippled sapphire, and nature was purring with content. I think I have not spoken of the fine echo which answers from a certain point. It is not quite so good as the one at Killarney, of which Paddy boasted, that, to the question "How d'ye do," it replies "Pretty well, I thank you;" but I can affirm of it, that when, on leaving the village, with some emotion I called aloud "Good bye," echo answered as with emotion too, and in the same clear plaintive tone, "Good bye."

M. N.

LIX.—A LAST WORD.

GOVERNESSES: THE NATURE OF THEIR OFFICE.

To assist parents in the education of their children. They can do no more than this; for we must not confound education with instruction. It is now generally confessed that education comprises the whole of the influences under which children are brought up. The home therefore, the personal qualities of parents, and of the whole household, the friends and associates of the family, the way in which family affairs are managed, the relation which is maintained towards tradespeople, professional advisers, the laws, constitution, government and governors of the country, all enter into the education of children, and influence both their intellectual and moral characters throughout their lives.

It is necessary to bear this in mind when considering the office of the governess. The children are not, and cannot be, thrown on her hands to mould them at her will, or according to her best judgment. Her office is that of instructor: instructor in such branches of knowledge as are agreed on between her and the parents of her pupils; or, if the matter be left to her decision, in such as she deems fittest for them. In pursuing this instruction, moral and religious qualities are necessarily brought into play, for there can be

no diligent, earnest, and continuous study which does not strengthen the character and arouse the conscience. Direct moral and religious instruction is the especial office of parents. It may, however, be delegated by them to the governess, and so increase both her labor and her responsibilities. It may be, and often is, expected of her, while family influences, arrangements and circumstances are directly opposed to her vigilant and conscientious efforts. Yet, from an untiring sense of duty, from love of her pupils, from reverence for the immortal beings intrusted to her care, she may feel bound to persevere and do her utmost to train them in knowledge and holiness.

There is no position, then, in itself, more important or more honorable than that of a governess. Her pupils are God's children. He is leading them through all the discipline of earth to the everlasting abodes of heaven. She is one of his instruments in the work: dependent on Him, looking up to Him, drawing strength from Him, and seeking constantly the guidance of his infinite wisdom. She walks as in the light of heaven, amid all her labors, difficulties, and disappointments, and under the sense of her own shortcomings, defects, and sins. She is a minister of God, to her charge, for good. This is the highest portion of her office. She is this in some measure, even if parents fulfil their duty in giving direct moral and religious instruction, and see carefully to the daily surroundings of their children; for her mode of teaching, the motives she brings to bear upon their minds and hearts, the atmosphere around her flowing out from her own mind and heart, all powerfully influence her charge, and aid in the formation of their characters.

The institution of marriage has for its very object the preparation of a generation to fill the earth, when the present generation shall have passed away. Parents are such that to their hands may be committed, as a sacred trust, those who are to succeed them in the enjoyments and sufferings, the hopes and duties of the coming years. The conscious and unconscious training of their children, for time and for eternity, is therefore their proper business in life; the delight and the glory of their existence, rightly considered. Towards this end tend the father's labors and the mother's household cares. To this are subservient family arrangements, society, all that is in the outward world around. To give their purpose free course, all law, all government, all that grand, subtle influence—public opinion—are maintained and brought into daily operation. Our homes are the divinely appointed nurseries for the coming ages.

To assist parents in the discharge of their sacred trust is the office of the governess; to assist them more or less, as they desire, and she can. She has to carry out their views, or to lay before them her own, or to stand in their place, because they do not understand or will not take it, as the case may be. Under them, as under God also, she has to lead the children's steps up towards their fast-coming maturity, to aid in preparing them to become the instructed and conscientious future parents of a future race, to do her part towards

making them worthy dwellers upon earth, amid its pressing duties, until they also shall give way to their successors and pass on through death to immortality.

This is the essential view of the governess's office, its true nature; the details and the varieties which fall under this general description, it forms no part of the design of this paper to present. That both parents and governesses often do not see this to be the true nature of the office is too apparent in the anomalous position which the governess sometimes holds, in the disappointment and vexation which parents often experience, in the demands upon us for sympathy with the slighted and oppressed race of unfortunate ladies, condemned to tuition as a means of winning their daily bread, which are frequently made; but the office of governess, in itself, considered as a ministry from God, as an enlightened and instructed help to parents, as a sacred charge over the next generation of educated men and women, is full of dignity, of importance, of touching interest. It is fitted to call forth the strongest energies and the tenderest affections. It is worthy of all honor, of all respect, of all regard, of a place side by side with the sacred profession of a minister of Christ. She who holds it worthily should be cherished as a friend and sister by those who ask her to aid them in their holy work.

The moment a governess sinks into a mere dependent, a necessary intruder into the family circle, an object of mere civility, to be treated with cold and distant politeness, if with any consideration at all, to be lost sight of as much as possible, to be dismissed with rejoicing and a sense of intense relief, so soon as the glad conviction comes that her services can be dispensed with,—that moment the spirit has departed from her office, most likely too from her own soul. There is nothing for her, henceforth, but intellectual drudgery, heart-sickness, a weariness that longs for rest, even though it be in the grave. Bnt, she who can sink into this condition has mistaken her vocation, or has failed rightly to prepare herself for its discharge. Her unhappiness is not to be placed to the account of governess-ship, but to the fearful blunder as to her sacred office, made alike by herself and her *employers*. She is a servant where she should be a friend; a servant in another sense than that in which we should all be servants of God, of Christ, and of each other.

E. N.

LX.—NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Reprints. Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall.* By Acton Bell (Miss Ann Brontë). Smith and Elder.

Cheap editions of *Jane Eyre, Shirley,* and *Wuthering Heights,* etc.

THE THREE SISTERS.

"I had great pleasure in reading a few books, but not many: preferring always those on whose style or sentiment the writer's individual nature was plainly stamped."—VILLETTE.

(*Continued from page* 350.)

WHILE her two sisters were employed, the one on "Wuthering Heights," the other on "Agnes Grey," Charlotte was writing "The Professor." Most of our readers will by this time have read this novel and its preface, and have gathered therefrom a knowledge of the principles on which it was written. Realism in character and incident, the actual whenever admissible, the probable, or rather the most ordinary, in all cases. Upon some such maxims the writer started. And yet while clinging in detail to the letter of these maxims, she violates their spirit continuously from the first page. The book is written autobiographically, and the autobiographer is a *man.* That is to say, in order that she may represent actual life as it has appeared to her, that she may faithfully narrate what she has seen and felt, the authoress puts herself into a form which must necessarily have altered or modified the whole of her experiences and sentiments. This plan of unsexing themselves was common enough among the bygone race of romancists; but in them it mattered little, since their romances never aimed at analysis of individual thoughts and feelings, but at recital of startling incidents and surprises, elaboration of plot, and broad sketching of abstract passions. Dickens has given, in his "Bleak House," a notable example of this method of false personation in the present time. It is a perilous experiment for any one to make, an experiment almost suicidal to one honestly possessing actualism. Both "Wuthering Heights" and "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall" commence, it will be remembered, as male narrations, but both very soon pass on the distaff into female hands. Nevertheless, Currer Bell has succeeded in making the best of this false position, has succeded so well that women say "it is very natural," just as men compliment Mr. Dickens on his "Confessions of Esther Summerson." Long after the other two stories had found a publisher, "The Professor" was still wandering in its travel-labelled cover, finding no rest. "Currer Bell's book found acceptance nowhere, nor any acknowledgment of merit, so that something like the chill of despair began to invade her heart." We cannot understand why this book was so universally rejected,

while the others were accepted. It has certainly much more artistic merit in it than "Agnes Grey:" and on the other hand it has none of that terrible wild strength of thought and utterance rampant in "Wuthering Heights," which might well frighten the tender conventionalities of a publisher. Perhaps the reason is to be found in the flat uninteresting character of the opening. Until Crimsworth gets settled in the *pensionnat* abroad there is little to tempt one to farther perusal. Then the story becomes interesting. Zoraïde Reuter and Frances Henri are admirably drawn: there is nothing to come near them in the ordinary range of fiction. Pelet is good, and the sketches of the Belgian girls are unsurpassible. Hunsden is throughout unsatisfactory: he is manifestly drawn from the life line by line, and yet for the reader he never has any existence: he is (to the reader) a lay-figure put into a rigid attitude, without even a covering mantle on which the fancy can be exercised. It seems to us that this is attributable to the *false position* of the writer. Miss Brontë paints Hunsden from the life as he appeared to her, a woman, not as he would have appeared to Crimsworth, a man; and yet it is Crimsworth and not Miss Brontë who tells the reader about him. Here the realism of the described and the falsism of the describer do not harmonise.

In the "Professor," the life at the Brussels *pensionnat* is depicted with much general accuracy. The picture here and the picture in Villette are the same, only seen from different points of view. This Brussels life seems to have exercised a great effect upon Charlotte. Over Emily, as we have said before, it had no appreciable influence; in her the home-love was so strongly rooted that no change of climate could permanently affect it; it remained shut up and self-enclosed under the wintry aspect of foreign skies, opening again untouched and unchanged at the spring time of return home. With Charlotte it was different. She remained abroad longer than Emily, and thus perhaps became more acclimatised; she had less self-confidence than Emily, and here, under the judicious tutelage of M. Héger, advanced greatly in that power of self-measurement and self-estimation in which she was deficient; she here for the first time caught a glimpse of that world which she was so desirous to see; there may have been other circumstances, but, at all events, this Brussels sojourn was a crisis which acted perceptibly on her after-life. Two of her books she has founded upon it, and its effects are noticeable in all. In the year 1845 she writes, "There was a time when Haworth was a very pleasant place to me; it is not so now. I feel as if we were all buried here. I long to travel; to work; to live a life of action." In the same year a friend of hers tells her that "she ought not to stay at home; that to spend the next five years at home, in solitude and weak health, would ruin her; that she would never recover it. Such a dark shadow came over her face when I said, 'Think of what you'll be five years hence!' that I stopped, and said, 'Don't cry, Charlotte.' It is very evident that

a craving for a wider and more active life was at work within her, and the glimpse of the outer world she had seen doubtless did its part in exciting this craving.

This appears to be a suitable place for remarking on a few of the salient points in Miss Brontë's character and previous life. We have sketched in rough outline the circumstances which acted equally on all three of the sisters, and some peculiarities of temperament which distinguished the two younger; it remains for us to note down any striking traits that were peculiar to Charlotte. Exteriorly she was plain; very small and very thin, short-sighted, altogether physically feeble. This we notice because her consciousness of this lack of beauty, and her mental exaggeration thereof, materially affected her character. Acting on a disposition naturally shy, sensitive, and pensive, this consciousness deepened into a morbid self-depreciation. At one time she looked upon herself as a Pariah, incapable of attracting the affection of others, hopeless of sympathy, distrustful of any advances made to her. That theoretically she came to see afterwards the falsity of this view of want of beauty, her choosing of plain heroines for her novels, and her defence of that choice to her sisters, are sufficient proof; but practically she could never wholly surmount the weakness. Another depressing phase through which she passed was that of religious melancholy; this she entirely overcame. Thus, beneath her weakness an under current of strength was constantly flowing which in the end cleared its own path. Beneath her self-depreciation there was always an inner appreciation of her own powerful talents. Nothing could destroy it; discouragement after discouragement left it intact; she only returned with renewed efforts to try for the success which was to be. Her expectancy of success shows itself in her complainings of its long delay,—"I shall soon be thirty, and I have done nothing yet;"—"My youth is gone like a dream, and very little use have I ever made of it." From an early age she was aware that she had ideas worth expressing, and sought for means to express them. She tried to do this by the pencil, and failed. One can fancy the unskilful draughtswoman essaying vainly to reveal such glorious imaginings as Jane Eyre shows to Rochester. Very painful is *dumbness*, of whatever kind; very painful to have thoughts which imperatively demand to be clothed in some sort of speech, and to have no speech in which to clothe them. Or one can fancy her copying stroke by stroke microscopic line-engravings, as Lucy Snowe did; imitating parrot-wise, as it were, the utterance of another, and hoping thus to gain by practice an utterance of her own. Her labor over these minute drawings, together with the minuteness of her writing and of her needle-work, seriously injured her always weak sight. A little before the "Professor" was written, at the time when Mr. Brontë's eyes began to be affected, she feared that she was going blind, and was obliged to take great precautions and to restrict herself from many sources of pleasure. This fear must have weighed terribly on her spirits. She was naturally de-

spondent, seeing the dark, not the bright side of things, hopeless of joy, taking sorrow as her appointed lot. There is much in her character which seems to combine or to lie midway between the characters of her two sisters. She had Emily's strength with Anne's docility, Emily's self-concentration with Anne's predominating sense of *duty*, Emily's moral strength with Anne's physical weakness. Her despondency was terrible. No one can read certain of her letters and certain sombre passages in her books without having heart-felt pity for the writer. It must be remembered, too, that these were written by a person not given to weak complainings, a person who had more self-restraint than most of us. Hypochondria took her at times "to her death-cold bosom," and held her "with arms of bone." Supernatural terrors added their weight to try yet more the overstrung nerves, and Nature herself smote these tense nerves unpityingly, racking them to agony by her doleful winds and weary rains and iron frosts. But, while thus a martyr to these diseased nerves, she performed her little course of daily duties with a true martyr-like quietness. The early death of her elder sisters had an effect on her different to that which it had on the younger ones of the family. The cares and solicitudes of an elder sister devolved on her before she was nine years old, and, since these children had lost their mother, Charlotte had to occupy the place of a mother likewise. The way in which all three sisters performed their household duties and homely offices strikes us with no little admiration. We like to hear of Emily making the bread, or of Charlotte cutting the eyes out of the potatoes, and to picture these geniuses waiting on poor old Tabby. These princesses by divine right—by God's own letters patent, could not see the degradation of helping themselves. Pity and forgive them, ye fine ladies! ye exquisite pieces of waxen art-workmanship, who never come out of your silver-paper enwrapments lest the common air and the common sunlight shonld contaminate your beauty!

The "Professor" sought for a publisher in vain; but while it was still going the round of the London publishing-houses Currer Bell was employed upon another work, "Jane Eyre." This book was finished and printed before "Wuthering Heights" and "Agnes Grey" (long ago accepted, but delayed in the press) appeared. Charlotte accompanied her father to Manchester whither he went to have an operation performed for cataract, and at Manchester "Jane Eyre" was commenced. To criticise this novel which has been criticised so often, would be superfluous. Instead of this we shall attempt to call our reader's attention to the manner in which it was written, and the principles which directed its authoress. Mrs. Gaskell tells us of her solicitude in the choice of words, and how in her manuscript (her first manuscript that is, which consisted of small scraps of paper covered with microscopic writing) there are no obliterations of words and expressions, but of whole sentences only. She made out her thought, and the fit words to clothe it fully, com-

pletely before she wrote it, and so it was only when she afterwards saw it necessary to withdraw the thought that any erasure was required. She wrote by fits, and would sometimes come to a difficulty in her plot which stopped her progress for weeks. Those portions purely imaginary she thought over again and again, and dreamed about them, until suddenly the method to be taken would rise clearly before her. "Jane Eyre," we learn, originated from a dispute with her sisters, in which Charlotte upheld that the constant plan of making heroines necessarily beautiful, was artistically and even morally wrong. Her sisters maintained that a heroine could not be made interesting without beauty, and so "Jane Eyre" was written to prove the contrary. This we receive on authority of a friend of hers from her own lips. However this be, we may trace in Jane Eyre, as a character, many thoughts and feelings which belong naturally and peculiarly to Charlotte Brontë. We have no incongruity here, as we have in the "Professor," between the narrator and the style and matter of narration. All the feelings and sentiments are proper to Jane Eyre, and the general tone and spirit of them come immediately from the heart of Charlotte Brontë. Both Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe were most wisely chosen as fictitious narrators, and it may be noted that in "Shirley" where there is no character of this class, the story is told not autobiographically.

From Miss Brontë's letters on literary subjects, the broad plan on which she wrote may be pretty accurately gathered. She acts up to her views more strictly than most writers. She professes to follow truth and nature as her sole guides: truth and nature according to her own real experiences, not as she fancies them to be, nor as she deduces them from the experiences of others. Her characters are taken from the life, her incidents are mostly real, and these characters and incidents she modifies so that they work out easily and naturally her fictitious plot. Thus the characters are not literal portraits, not daguerreotypes copying precisely form and feature, even when they are most closely imitated from those whom she knew well. Some of them are mere sketches by the wayside as it were; for instance, Helstone in "Shirley," whose prototype she saw but once, when she was ten years old: she was struck with him, and afterwards when she was at Roe Head heard him talked about; "some mentioned him with enthusiasm, others with detestation. I listened to various anecdotes, balanced evidence against evidence, and drew an inference." These characters again for the most part are placed in circumstances very different to those of the real persons. Having discovered by analysis what were the essential traits which constituted the personality of her model, she could then deduce how these traits would be likely to work when placed under new and fictitious influences. In her observance of life she proceeded by induction from effects up to first principles; in her imaginative recreations she deduced from the first principles so discovered effects which would follow under certain conditions. When these conditions were little different

from those of the model, this model would be easily discoverable from the portrait, though the effects might still be equally as much a matter of deduction as in cases where the conditions were widely different. There is scarcely a character of hers but what has its "germ" in reality. How much she felt the necessity of having this real basis on which to work may be seen from what she writes of Paulina in "Villette." "I greatly apprehend, however, that the weakest character in the book is the one I aimed at making the most beautiful; and, if this be the case, the fault lies in its wanting the germ of the *real*, in its being purely imaginary. I felt that this character lacked substance; I fear that the reader will feel the same." She talks too of her "stock of materials for fiction being very slender," and confesses that for this reason she cannot be a prolific writer. Her incidents, as her characters, are real or closely imitative of reality. Lowood is a very accurate picture of Cowan's Bridge, though a one-sided picture. The plot of Rochester marrying or purposing to marry the governess of his child, while his wife was yet living, was no wild dream of imagination. The actual event took place while Miss Brontë was at Roe Head and she no doubt heard the story and recalled it afterwards, and from this "germ" worked out that most enthralling portion of her novel. Again, the supernatural incident of the voice in "Jane Eyre" she asserted solemnly had really occurred, whether to herself or to another does not appear. Again, the bite of the mad dog in "Shirley" was a literal description of what had happened to her sister Emily. Those incidents which people would pronounce most surely to be imaginary were strictly based on the actual. How far she consciously or unconsciously drew from herself in the character of Jane Eyre cannot be precisely determined. She said that her heroine was only herself inasmuch as she was small and plain; but nevertheless it would be more difficult to point out features of dissimilarity than of similarity. Lucy Snowe is different from Jane Eyre, and probably both are very different from Charlotte Brontë; but to distinguish exactly how, and why, and in what, is too delicate a matter for criticism.

But while she clings so closely to reality, while she is so careful to ground her air-castles upon a solid basis, she yet feels and acknowledges and appreciates fully the semi-divine power of imagination. It seems to us that it was *because* she knew this power so well, *because* her own imagination was so vigorous and strong, that she scrupulously binds herself under the law of realism. It is seldom that she lets this mighty-winged bird fly abroad. Sometimes, in what we may call her personifications, she unhoods its eyes and flings free its jesses. Thus we have a "First Blue-Stocking," or a picture of "Nature at her sunset prayers," or of the "Evening Star," or of "Hypochondria." These personifications of hers are glorious poems.

When we consider her powers of analysis, and find them wedded with this fulness and richness of imagination, we begin to see how complete was her genius. Many authors have a greater faculty

for noting and grasping character, many authors have an imaginative faculty achieving wider and higher flights, but how few have both in like proportion to Currer Bell.

Her plots have little in them to commend; they are not artistically evolved or carefully perfected, nor are they very true to nature. That of "Shirley" is perhaps the most complete. In "Villette," as the authoress confesses, the interest changes from one set of characters to another. The "Professor" has no plot. The Thornfield portion of "Jane Eyre" stands out wonderfully from the other books for its most perfect elaboration; but this cannot be said of it as a whole. Still there is one grand link of unity between the first and the succeding portion, which has always struck us forcibly. In her separation from Rochester, Jane Eyre undergoes a fearful struggle with her erring heart; in the final scene with St. John she undergoes an analogous struggle with her erring judgment. In both cases she is victorious: as right judgment or principle comes to her aid in the first need, so her heart comes to her aid in the second. "I was almost as hard beset by him now as I had been once before in a different way by another. I was a fool both times. To have yielded then would have been an error of principle; to have yielded now would have been an error of judgment." Much might be made of this by any one metaphysically inclined, but it is wiser to leave it without further comment. Authors are too often made answerable by their commentators for hidden meanings of which they never dreamed. The intricacies of her plots, such as coincidences and discoveries, are managed with but little delicacy. For instance, we feel a glaring improbability in the manner in which Jane Eyre becomes introduced to her unknown cousins, and in the transformation of Mrs. Pryor into Caroline Helstone's mother. The truth is that Miss Brontë regarded the plot as a very secondary matter in a work of fiction; as merely the frame of the picture, which so long as it is of due dimensions and of harmonious style possesses all needful qualifications. The estimate formed of the importance of construction varies according as fiction is looked upon in the light of a copy of nature, or as an absolute art. The daguerreotypists cannot consistently allow of any plot, and whenever they do inconsistently manufacture one it is wanting in the requisite art, and so, to speak paradoxically, is unnatural.

Two years after the appearance of "Jane Eyre," "Shirley" was published. A weight of sorrows fell upon Miss Brontë during the writing of it. It was commenced soon after the completion of her former novel, and she took great pains with it. The characters and the incidents and the scenery are all imitated very closely from reality. The Luddite riots and the attempted destruction of Hollow's Mill she had heard narrated by the mistress of the school at Roe Head. How attentively she listened to the story may be inferred from the fact that Mr. Cartwright, the owner of the attacked mill was a gentleman "having some foreign blood in him." Field Head

was a house in the neighbourhood called Oakwell Hall. The scenery all round Roe Head is the scenery of "Shirley." The heroine, we hear, was intended in many points as a portrait of Emily. It is very difficult to assimilate the frank, open-hearted, somewhat dashing Shirley with her prototype; but, as was her custom, Miss Brontë took the "germ" of the character and developed it according to what she conceived would be its development under new conditions. Studying Shirley more carefully we find under her frank exterior much mental tenacity, reservation, and self-sufficient strength. The incident of the mad dog we have said before is described literally as it happened. The Yorkes were, it seems, intended to be portraits more accurate than ordinary. Their description was shown to one of the family, and he pronounced it true, but not "half strong enough." There is no character of Miss Brontë's surpassed by Caroline Helstone. The tinge of sadness and of self-depreciation which assimilates it to the autobiographists of the other two novels gives it a life in the hands of the authoress, which animates and harmonises all its quiet, tender beauties. Robert Moore is admirably worked out. Even the most romantic reader cannot despise the man. He shows to the greatest advantage at the very moment of his disgrace, in the very consummation of his meanness and weakness. That confession of his, its manliness and bitterness, and then the avenging shot, achieve pardon for him even from the most devoted advocate of true love and disinterestedness. How brave is the man as he stands humiliated before Shirley, and will not add another lie to explain or excuse or palliate that one monstrous lie of offering his hand to her. "Hortense" is a sketch truly humorous. The manner in which history is introduced in this novel serves as an example to some maxims laid down by Miss Brontë on the subject, arising from criticisms on Mr. Thackeray's "Esmond." She complains of the undue extent to which the history of the time is introduced in that book, and goes on to say that history should occupy no further place in a novel than as it acts directly on the fortunes of the characters. There are few authors who, in connection with the Luddite riots and the affairs of Robert Moore, would not have taken occasion to launch out into some description and consideration of public matters and measures. Miss Brontë confines herself strictly to their influence on Hollow's Mill and its vicinity: to the readers of "Shirley" the orders in council are repealed, and the blockaded ports thrown open solely for the benefit of Moore.

In the midst of the composition of this story came those heavy afflictions which left Miss Brontë alone with her father. First Branwell died, suddenly at last, though they had known that this must be the not distant end of his excesses. Then came the terrible last illness of Emily; and immediately after Anne began to fade, and passed away gently and gradually. These great griefs are too holy for a stranger to touch upon. "I left papa soon, and went into the dining-room: I shut the door; I tried to be glad that I was come

home. I have always been glad before, except once, even then I was cheered. But this time joy was not to be the sensation. I felt that the house was all silent, the rooms were all empty. I remembered where the three were laid, in what narrow dark dwellings, never more to reappear on earth. So the sense of desolation and bitterness took possession of me. The agony that *was to be undergone*, and *was not* to be avoided, came on. * * * * I do not know how life will pass, but I certainly do feel confidence in Him who has upheld me hitherto. Solitude may be cheered, and made endurable beyond what I can believe. The great trial is when evening closes and night approaches. At that hour we used to assemble in the dining-room, we used to talk. Now I sit by myself, necessarily I am silent. I cannot help thinking of their last days, remembering their sufferings, and what they said and did, and how they looked in mortal affliction. Perhaps all this will become less poignant in time." We may imagine with what feelings she resumed the "sorrow-broken" thread of her story; the pathos of the "Valley of the Shadow of Death" chapter is explained now. We may imagine with what feelings she turned again to the portrait of the dead Emily in her heroine, replaced it on the easel, and put the finishing touches to that dim record of the lost. Very mournful to think of are her lonely pacing to and fro in the little Haworth parlor.

When Mr. Brontë made that eccentric trial of his children's knowledge, putting a mask on each in turn and bidding them speak boldly from under cover of it, the question which he asked Charlotte was, "What is the best book in the world?" "The Bible," answered Charlotte. "And what is the next best?" asked Mr. Brontë. "The book of nature," said Charlotte. These two best books she never ceased to study. "*Elle était nourrie de la Bible*," said M. Héger of her. The book of nature she read and understood as few have the gift of reading and understanding it. One of the points which the critics fixed on for praise in "Jane Eyre," was the "singular felicity in the description of natural scenery" which its writer possessed. For truth of detail in descriptions of nature, Miss Brontë is unrivalled: she has inaugurated a new school in that way. Her word-painting too is perfect: she analyses a landscape as she analyses people, (or engravings or whatever came within her reach,) discovers the particular points which give it its character, and then clearly and definitely describes these points in the only words which can describe them. She paints with equal truth the flat swampy Belgian lowlands and her own hilly moors. This power is derived firstly from her gift of analysis, and secondly from her felicitous choice of language. But besides this truth of description we find in her books another manner of dealing with nature. This latter is not new: most writers, whether expressly or by implication, have connected the elementary powers of nature sympathetically with humanity. The idea of this sympathetic connection would appear to be innate in man. Hence arose in part the systems in nature-

worship; hence any extraordinary manifestations of nature, such as comets, eclipses, and such like, were in ages of less knowledge thought to betoken or to accompany human ills. Novelists, particularly such as aim at the poetical, have thus dealt with nature *ad nauseam;*—clear skies and sudden storms, peaceful vallies and rugged hills, sunsets and twilights and moon risings, invariably herald or enshrine analogous phases of the lives of hero and heroine. With Miss Brontë this use of nature is not infrequent, but it is delicately managed, and is an adaptation of her own peculiar feelings, not a mere pretty ornamentation. Perhaps no one was ever so sensitive to effects of climate and atmosphere as she was. The winds and frosts and rains and still heats tyrannised over her, and worked upon her nerves till she suffered agony. Her "keening banshee-winds," forewarning death, she heard oft-times with her own ears.

We come to Miss Brontë's last novel, "Villette." Between the publication of this and the publication of "Shirley" a dreary period had elapsed; a period of wretched health and wretched spirits. The uniform sadness of the book echoes the tone of its writer's mental state in a touching manner. We are not to suppose that Lucy Snowe is an intentional portrait of Miss Brontë, that she aforethought studied her own image as reflected in the mirror of her mind, and copied the pale grief-furrowed features line by line. She has cautioned us against such supposition with regard to Jane Eyre. Still the spirit of her own letters is identical with that of poor Lucy Snowe's confessions. None but a very sorrowful person could have written this joyless book. At this time, however, the grey Haworth life was chequered by visits to London and elsewhere, and some consequent outward anticipation in social gaieties. The effects of this too we find in the novel; in the criticism on Rachel and in many minor particulars she is as true as ever to her doctrine of realism. The picture here is a truer picture than that in the "Professor" of her Brussels experiences, because it is told by a Lucy Snowe, not by a William Crimsworth. Criticism would here again be superfluous. One remark only we will make. Her theory that some people are born *not* to meet with happiness in this world is peculiarly and by nature her own. That Lucy Snowe should marry Paul Emanuel, and so have some sunset to her sunless day, was *not to be*: it would have been, from her point of view, not only artistically but morally untrue. Herein appears in all its strength that hopelessness which was at the root of her character, which covered her life-tree with autumn leaves in spring time, and with withered fruit in summer.

Happily Miss Brontë had a sunset to her own life, the brighter that she had never dared to hope it. With "Villette," however, her life for us closes.

J. A.

A SUMMARY OF PAMPHLETS, REPORTS, AND PROSPECTUSES

Received in connection with different articles in late numbers.

On the Importance of the Study of Economic Science. A Lecture by W. B. Hodgson, LL.D. William Blackwood and Sons. This lecture advises economic science as part of the education of girls.

The Journal of the Dublin Statistical Society. Hodges and Smith, Dublin.

An Out-Stretched Hand to the Fallen. By Mrs. G. W. Sheppard. W. C. and J. Penny, Bath Street, Frome.

The New Zealand Circular of "Assisted Passages." Containing particulars on emigration to that colony. Arthur Willis and Co., 3, Crosby Square, Bishopsgate, London.

The Houseless Poor. A pamphlet reprinted from the "Globe" of January 25th, 1859.

Journal of the Evening Classes for Young Men. Colingridge, 117, Aldersgate Street, E.C. This December number contains an article on educated female labor.

A Neglected Line of Study strongly recommended to the rich. By the author of "Morning Clouds." Longman. A pamphlet on the poverty of the working clergy.

Deborah; or Christian Principles for Domestic Servants. By the Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D. Hamilton Adams and Co., London. Contains exhortations and also practical advice and instruction; with four pages on savings banks and the investment of wages.

A Plea for Teetotalism and the Maine Liquor Law. By James Haughton. William Tweedie, 337, Strand. A little book dedicated to the "Instructors of Youth."

Self Culture. A periodical pamphlet issued by the Rev. John R. Beard, D.D. Kent and Co., Paternoster Row. The current number contains an article, "On the Education of Women: general principles; need of working women's colleges; the 'English Woman's Journal.'"

The Rights and Condition of Women. By the Rev. Samuel J. May. Reprinted from the fourth American edition. Edward T. Whitfield, Strand.

A Sermon. By an American Minister, who was one of the most respected advocates of the Anti-Slavery cause.

Christian Philosophy in Word and Work. Reprinted from the "Irish Quarterly Review" of July, 1859. A charming account of Madame la Baronne de Vaux, and the Collegiate Institution of Juilly, near Paris.

Essays on Constitutional Reform. By John Collins. Longman. Contains some good remarks on the miseries endured by the poorest class of women.

SANITARY PAMPHLETS AS FOLLOWS—

Observations on the Treatment of Spinal and other Deformities. By Franz Bernard.

The Physical Education of Young Ladies. By Franz Bernard. Simpkin and Marshall.

Female Hygiene. An excellent pamphlet, reprinted from the "Bristol Journal of Homœopathy" for January, 1860. Davy and Son, 8, Gilbert Street, Oxford Street.

The Practice of Hiring Wet Nurses. Churchill, New Burlington Street. A paper contributed to the Public Health Department of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, and published by permission of the Council.

Sixteenth Report of the Home for Confirmed Invalids. School Press, Gomers Walk. An account of a small institution for the supply of a want which is grievously felt in England. "Incurables" have generally no resource but the workhouse, with its scanty fare and cheerless arrangements.

Non-inflammable Fabrics. By Fred. Versmann, F.C.S., and Alphons Oppenheim, Ph.D., A.C.S. Trübner and Co. A chemical treatise on the rendering dresses, furniture, etc. indestructible by fire, and thus preserving human life.

Medicine as a Profession for Women. Tinson, 43, Centre Street, New York. This lecture was prepared by Drs. Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell as an exposition of the effort now being made in New York to open the profession of medicine to women. It was delivered in Clinton Hall, on the 2nd of December, 1859, and is now published at the request of the trustees of the New York Infirmary for Women.

A Circular of the Hospital for Women and Children in the City of Boston; in connection with the New England Female Medical College. This hospital will be under the care of Dr. Marie E. Zakrzewska, formerly of the Royal Hospital in Berlin, late Resident Physician of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children.

Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, 1859. London, John W. Parker and Son.

THE third volume of "Transactions" published by this Association has just issued from the press, and, with the intention of returning to it on a future occasion, we seize the earliest opportunity of introducing it to the notice of our readers, indicating a few of the select papers which bear most strongly on the special subject of our Journal. To the Department of Education the Rev. Mr. Howson contributes a paper "On Schools for Girls of the Middle Class," in which he gives an account of the establishment and results of a middle class school for girls in Liverpool, whose admirable programme of instruction presents a model which it is to be hoped may be followed in supplying what is beginning to be felt as an urgent requirement, and will soon become an eager demand, namely girls' schools for the middle class. Teaching not showy and unsubstantial accomplishments, but giving a good and solid education and thorough mental training.

"Why do I single out girls?" says Mr. Howson, introducing his subject. "Partly because they have been more overlooked than the boys; partly because I believe the condition of their education to be worse than that of the boys; partly because the agencies now set in motion for raising the standard and improving the quality of the education of the classes in question are almost inoperative on the female (*i.e.*, what ought to be the better) half of them. Here even universities are powerless. The vision

Of sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair—

is only a poet's dream; and here is no place for dreaming, however true it may be that to dream is pleasanter than to work. But there is another reason, as I have hinted, why this subject should be closely and separately considered. The girls are more important than the boys. The power of woman is really the greatest power in the country. This power is all the greater, because it is not openly and visibly exercised; it is the power, not of force, but of influence. It is not merely that the mothers of each generation

are the most influential instructors of the next,—not merely that, while we men are occupied with a thousand employments that take us away from our homes and our children, the influence of woman is exercised continuously, and at that period of life when impressions are most easily received. This is not all. The influence is continuous over the men themselves. It is exercised, whether felt or not, at each part of the whole social machine. If any question in the whole world is suitable for the consideration of an Association for Social Science, it is the inquiry into the kind of education which our women receive in their girlhood."

Mrs. Fanny Hertz contributes a most interesting paper "On Mechanics' Institutes for Working Women, with special reference to the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire."

This paper points out the multitude of evils in such a community as Bradford, where the women of the working class are factory operatives, as traceable to the low standard of female education. Absence of cultivation may be read in the low type of the population wanting in stamina from long continued disobedience to physiological laws, in the numbers of neglected unhealthy children, in the coarse manners of both men and women, in cheerless comfortless homes, badly cooked meals, ill-managed expenditure, and in intemperance caused by the superior attractions of the public-house. The female population of manufacturing towns, such as Bradford, has much in common with artizans, and mechanics' institutes seem the agencies best fitted to give these working women the first impulse toward self-culture. The principle on which these institutions are conducted recommends them to the independence which forms a striking feature in the character of these mill girls, and the success which has attended the female institutes of Bradford and Huddersfield shows that they are willing to take advantage of the opportunity offered.

The Rev. J. P. Norris contributes a valuable paper "On Girls' Industrial Training," which we shall pass over for the present, as we have not the requisite space which it demands.

In the Public Health Department we notice an interesting paper "On the Physical Effects of Diminished Labor." Mr. Baker goes back to the time before the Factory Acts were passed for proof of the fact that the long hours of factory labor then almost universal, were the cause of deformity and disease, preparatory to showing the effects produced by the working of these Acts.

"There are at present in the kingdom," says Mr. Baker, "682,517 persons employed in factories, compared with 354,684 in 1835: of these, 387,826 are females, compared with 167,696; and 46,071 children between 8 and 13 years of age, as compared with 56,455; yet all the diseases which were specific to factory labor in 1832 have as nearly as possible disappeared. We scarcely see a case of in-knee; occasionally one of curvature of the spine, arising more from labor with poor food than from labor specifically. The factory leg is no more among us, except an old man or woman limps by, to remind us of the fearful past and of its contrast with the more rational and social present."

The above statement is the result of inquiries made by Mr. Baker for the compilation of this paper, and responded to by the certifying

surgeons of the large manufacturing districts from whence proceeded the complaints of 1832. One of these gentlemen writes, "In 1832 a large majority of the female factory workers in this district were pale, emaciated, down-hearted looking creatures, showing no disposition to mirth or cheerfulness. The successors of these girls who work the shorter hours of the Factory Act are fair and florid, strong and muscular, not only cheerful but full of fun. So striking a difference in twenty-five years I could not have believed, had I not marked and seen it with my own eyes."

In a paper "On the Health of Bradford," Dr. Macturk, while showing that a marked decrease of fever and dysentery has taken place, beginning and increasing with the improved sanitary condition of the town, observes that consumption is on the increase. This increase he attributes to the factory system, remarking that the practice of mothers working in the factories is prejudicial to their own health, but particularly so to the health of their children. The diet of the workers is too low, and their clothing too slight, while they often stand all day with wet feet and garments, proving the necessity for the diffusion of the laws of health among working women.

"Factory Labor" and the "Industrial Employment of Women" are dealt with in the summary of the Social Economy Department, several of the papers on these subjects having been printed through other channels. Having directed the attention of our readers to this valuable repertory of information on social subjects we shall reserve comment for a future notice.

LXI.—OPEN COUNCIL.

[As these pages are intended for general discussion, the Editors do not hold themselves responsible for the opinions expressed.]

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

Science and Art Department,
Female Classes, 37, Gower Street, W.C.

MADAM,

May I be permitted to say a few words in your valuable Journal, relative to the late determination of the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education to withdraw the annual grant of money from the Female School of Art, 37, Gower Street?

In order, however, that the present position of the school may be clearly understood, it may perhaps be necessary to give a short account of its origin.

The deficiency of good taste in the art of design had long been felt in England, and inquiries had arisen as to the reason why our neighbours in France should so far excel us in the production of manufactured goods re-

quiring refinement of taste in design. Men of sound judgment attributed our shortcomings, not so much to any natural incapacity as a nation for the art of design, as to a lamentable want of cultivation of that art; and moreover maintained that French designers and artizans had the advantage of receiving their art-education in the "Schools of Design" which were established in many parts of their country. The English government took the matter into consideration, and at length founded the "School of Design" in Somerset House. At first male students only were admitted, but subsequently young women were allowed to share in the advantages of the institution, Mrs. Mc.Ian, a well-known and distinguished artist, being appointed superintendent of the female department. Most satisfactory proofs of the benefits to be derived from the school were soon shown in the designs produced by the students, many of which were afterwards manufactured and exhibited in the Great Exhibition of 1851; twelve of the students were also honored by the presentation of season tickets from His Royal Highness Prince Albert, and several were chosen to make drawings from the rich treasures of many lands which were there collected.

Owing to a deficiency of accommodation, the female school was subsequently removed to 37, Gower Street, and the male school to Marlborough House; and both gradually merged into "The Department of Science and Art," and became known as "Schools of Ornamental Art."

After a time the male school was again removed to South Kensington, where suitable premises had been provided for its accommodation, and female classes were also opened in the same building. But the Gower Street School, owing to the resignation of Mrs. Mc.Ian in 1857, was now placed under the care of Mr. Burchett, who was also Head Master at South Kensington, and who, in his address to the students, stated that the two establishments of South Kensington and Gower Street were "identical." In October, 1859, Mr. Burchett's superintendence at Gower Street ceased, and I was appointed to succeed him in his office. On the 1st December, 1859, the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education issued a minute of the proceedings with regard to the school, the concluding paragraphs of which I here extract.

"My Lords consider that the time has arrived when the department should no longer be charged with the local expenses, which in other cases are paid by the voluntary principle; and that if the school at Gower Street is to be maintained, some voluntary agency must undertake its local management.

"Towards accomplishing this, the department will give every aid in its power, but it should be clearly understood that the rent and local expenses of the school will cease to be paid by the Government in the course of next year, and that if no voluntary agency should come forward the school will be closed.

"By order of the Committee of Council on Education. Dec. 1st, 1859."

Thus it appears, that if the school is still to be carried on, it must be placed on an independent basis. It is therefore proposed to raise a fund for the purpose of meeting the local expenses of the establishment; or, if thought advisable, of building or purchasing suitable premises for its use; by this latter means avoiding the annual expenditure in house-rent. For this purpose I venture to ask the sympathy and aid of the nobility, the gentry, and the public in general, who, I feel convinced, will not allow so valuable an institution to fall to the ground.

Of its importance as a means of providing honorable and remunerative employment for educated women, too much can scarcely be said, especially at the present time, when one hears the question asked on all sides, "What can educated women do?" Few indeed are the means by which they can earn a livelihood; and I believe I am fully justified in stating, that should the Gower Street School be closed, one of the most useful institutions for the professional education of women would be lost to the public. It is an important consideration that the proposed means of benefitting this class of our population should be in a central position, and accessible to as large a number as possible.

Not wishing to trespass longer on your space I omit further details, which however I shall be happy to supply to any of your readers wishing for further information.

I am yours faithfully,
LOUISA GANN,
Superintendent.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

MADAM,

The sympathy expressed in your Journal *for*, and the encouragement you have ever held out *to*, those of your sex who are endeavoring or are desirous to earn an honest livelihood, induce me to lay before you a case, the details of which, though of no very uncommon character, will, I am sure, commend it to your friendly and most considerate attention.

A young woman, not yet twenty-six years of age, at the immature age of eighteen contracted an unsuitable and therefore unhappy marriage. Her parents moved in respectable society. Being rather a delicate child, her education somewhat suffered from the relaxation from study which it was thought her constitution demanded; but she made considerable proficiency in music and drawing, which she cultivated with a view to practise them as a means of future subsistence. At the same time she was accustomed to share with an elder sister the duties of housekeeping and cooking, and attending upon an invalid mother. After living with her husband for several months and becoming the mother of a healthy child, she was compelled by her husband's dissolute and improvident habits to return with her infant to the parental home. The husband soon after left the locality, and she has not seen him since; but every item of intelligence respecting him renders her more hopeless of his reclamation, and precludes the most distant expectation of again sharing with him the duties and responsibilities of domestic life. But now comes the peculiar hardship of the case. She is able and anxious to earn a living for herself and her child. She feels herself eligible for many descriptions of situation. She can present satisfactory testimonials as to character; she is willing to submit to any reasonable probation to test her competency; but when asked if she is a single woman, she *cannot* and *will not* tell a lie! She has had many temptations to do so. She has been on the point of securing most advantageous situations; but no sooner has the fact transpired that she is a married woman separated from her husband—although it would be an easy thing to secure herself from his interruption—than she is at once deemed ineligible, and the negotiations are broken off! This has happened again and again, till at length wearied with the repulses she has met with, she has ceased to make efforts which only brought her disappointment and humiliation.

And now, my dear madam, what is the poor lady, and hundreds similarly situated, to do? She simply wants employment—honest, virtuous, remunerating employment. She is well adapted for various situations. She could take the place of a daughter in a household; she could occupy the position of companion to a lady; she could wait in a shop, especially where music and drawing materials are sold, with which she is familiar. She has an easy address and a somewhat prepossessing appearance; but all these legitimate advantages are to be sacrificed, because in the choice of a husband she made an unwise selection. Do not suppose for a moment that I desire to justify those heedless females who reject parental counsel in a matter so momentous, and ally themselves to certain wretchedness when they take the marriage vows. Nevertheless there is a broad and definite distinction between indiscretion and depravity, and surely among the numbers who read your monthly pages, there are not a few kind hearts who would execrate the sentiment that because a woman has married young, and married unwisely, she is thenceforth to be driven to starvation or prostitution. And yet there are thousands who

act out the sentiment who would warmly disavow it, and such in fact do all those who deny to a deserted wife the means of earning a virtuous subsistence.

But I will say no more. I confess that I have chosen your columns as a medium of communication with the public, in the hope that the case whose peculiarities I have sketched, may be brought before a class of ladies who properly estimate the difficulties and disadvantages under which their sex labors when an act of indiscretion has dislodged them from their vantage ground. If any further particulars are required, I hold myself in readiness to give the necessary explanation, and shall feel a high gratification in doing anything to meet or mitigate a case of what I consider to be great hardship.

I give you my address, and am, Madam, with the best wishes for the success of your Journal,

Yours obediently,
A FATHER.

[This letter is fully corroborated by a communication lately received from a lady well known to the public. Mrs. S. C. Hall wrote to an emigration office on behalf of a lady in whom she was interested. The following was the reply made.—EDS. E. W. J.]

"Australian Emigration Office, 44, Poultry, Dec. 15.

"Madam,

"A female deserted by her husband is ineligible for a free passage to any of the Australian colonies.

"J. H. SCOTT DURBIN."

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

Wellington, Somerset.

MADAM,

It is with the deepest interest that I have read your excellent paper upon Female Educated Labor, and have rejoiced to observe the earnest and practical spirit which it has aroused. Permit me to add one suggestion to those which have already claimed your notice. It is one that will not appear strange or novel, having already been occasionally carried out with the happiest results, and might easily and rapidly be brought into very general operation.

It is to intrust as far as possible the conduct of our Post-Offices to female management, selecting those whose abilities, education, and moral character would qualify them for the duties of the appointment, but who from adverse circumstances are now obtaining an insufficient livelihood. Such persons are to be found in every town and neighbourhood, and I would suggest that whenever a vacancy occurs, the preference should be given by the post-office authorities to female instead of male candidates.

In support of this I beg to offer the following considerations.

The labor connected with a post-office does not require much physical power, perhaps we might enumerate the chief qualifications as quickness of eye, strict integrity, a retentive memory, and patient industry, in none of which requisites are women inferior to men, indeed many would uphold the opposite theory.

Again, for equal salaries it will be evident that a class of persons higher in social standing, in energy, education, and general ability would be obtained by the employment of female labor in these offices. And the position would not be an exposed one, as the salaries now current would allow of two or more persons sharing the responsibilities of the office. For to many widows with one or more daughters, or for two sisters who from improvidences not their own, are suffering the saddest privations, such a position

would afford an adequate and honorable maintenance, besides the certainty that persons of this class would in many cases exhibit much more ability and energy than the ordinary postmaster of provincial towns.

As I before stated this has already been tried with the most satisfactory results, and if the urgent claims of this class were represented to the post-office authorities, together with the probable advantages likely to arise from the adoption of this plan, I fully believe they would be disposed at once to give it a more extended trial.

Excuse my thus trespassing upon your time, but I could not but hope that you will deem this suggestion worthy of consideration, as it would open a very extended sphere for the class whose misfortunes you so nobly strive to mitigate.

I remain, Madam, your obedient Servant,
C.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

MADAM,

The excellent suggestion offered by you in your paper on Marketable Female Labor, that fathers should bring up their daughters to earn their own bread in a plain honest way, will, I fear, meet with many objectors, precisely in that class who would be most benefited by following your advice. Those whose affairs are prosperous will, most probably, provide for their daughters in one way or another; those whose success is more doubtful will dislike the so-called exposure involved in so unusual a step as having their daughters instructed in a trade. I can think of but one remedy for the evil, and that is rather a Quixotic one, but we live in an age of free and generous movement, in which those who are at ease, or might be at ease, decline the privilege and would prefer getting into a difficulty for the common good. It is for ladies, then, whose circumstances and position are unimpeachable, to strike out into new paths; they would be gainers in their own persons by the change, they would find their minds strengthened, their sympathies enlarged, they would be better friends and more entertaining companions, and would suffer no loss either of grace or propriety from their "Two years before the Mast."

As I am dealing in wild schemes I may just as well start another, and then I have done. Are we not to look forward and hope for our learned professors, our women physicians? and how long is our hope to be deferred?

I am aware that to attempt any plan of the sort at the present time would be premature, but surely it ought to be kept steadily in view, and to be a motive to all women for setting up a higher standard of attainment among themselves, and endeavoring to convince the world and each other that they are capable of something more serious than perpetual novels. I am convinced that all thoughtful women are looking with great desire for this new opening for their fellow-women, and I am also convinced that many an earnest heart felt the chill of disappointment that your admirable remarks included no suggestion on that important subject.

I beg to recommed it to your notice, and remain, Madam,

Yours, with great respect,

November 17th, 1859. A. B.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

DEAR MADAM,

Much has been said in your Journal concerning the industrial education of girls. As every crumb of information upon such a subject is useful, and

may elicit something more useful still from others better versed in these things, it may not be uninteresting to your readers to hear of a plan which has worked well in a rural parish containing about five hundred inhabiants.

The only day school is a national one kept by an uncertificated master at a salary of thirty pounds a year and a house. His wife, for a small consideration, teaches the girls plain work and knitting for two hours in the afternoon. As those interested in the welfare of the parish felt how necessary it was that the girls should also have instruction in household matters, it was represented to the master's wife that this end would be gained if she would select out of the school six of the elder girls, and give each of these, for a week at a time, two or three hours instruction in cooking, washing, scouring, rubbing grates, and making beds. This was cheerfully assented to, and one girl is now under industrial instruction for one week out of every six. The plan has been found to work admirably, not one complaint has been heard, not one dinner spoilt.

The mothers are well pleased, for they say it is easier at home to do a thing themselves, than to teach their daughters to do it: and this plan I am convinced is better than that of sending young girls to learn such things at a farm-house, which is the worst possible school for them. I also consider this simple scheme better than an institution which should be an industrial school only, for the change of instruction acts as a stimulus, and each girl is glad when her turn comes to help in the house-work of the neat and excellent mistress.

Of course the success of this plan must depend entirely upon the character and principle of the latter. Hoping this small item of information may be useful to those who are interested in the welfare of the agricultural population.

I beg to subscribe myself,

Your sincere well-wisher,

December, 1859. E. H. R.

LXII.—PASSING EVENTS.

THIS new year of grace, 1860, dawns favorably for regenerated Italy. After long months of doubt, trouble, and ominous foreboding, France and England have pronounced in favor of the Italians choosing their own government; Count Cavour has taken the helm of state once more in hand, and, unanimous in their councils and conduct, Sardinia and Tuscany present a patient and resolute front to the open and insidious attacks of their enemies. Louis Napoleon has again spoken, and, Roman Catholic Christendom trembles to its foundation. This "eldest son of the church," firmly, though affectionately and respectfully, suggests that the Holy Father, obeying the progressive tendency of the age, should allow his revolted provinces the tranquil enjoyment of the independence they have assumed, and, contenting himself with spiritual domination, confine his temporal power to the limited arena of the Papal States.

This proposition the Pope declines. Pledged on his accession to the chair of St. Peter, to maintain the integrity of the states of the Church, he will never consent to the separation of the Romagna, and while thus the Father of the Faithful prepares as he best can to oppose the carrying out of this im-

perial solution of a knotty point, a schism reigns among his children which threatens to shake the Church to its very foundation. While priests and pulpit orators side with the Pope, denouncing as "bad Catholics" all who would divide his temporal and spiritual power, hinting even at excommunication, the press shows a strong current of feeling in the opposite direction, educated and intelligent Roman Catholics pronouncing strongly in favor of the theory propounded in the famous pamphlet of "Le Pape et le Congrès," since endorsed by Louis Napoleon. Verily, we are on the eve of great things, and no man knows what the morrow may bring forth.

While thus turning a cold shoulder to Rome, Louis Napoleon extends the right hand of fellowship to England, and, suddenly, without hint or whisper to the effect, we find a Treaty of Commerce between England and France, if not actually signed and sealed, needing only this formality for its completion. The import duty on French wines is to be reduced in England from one hundred and fifty to thirty per cent. Silk to be admitted free. The duty upon iron imported into France to be seven francs per hundred kilogrammes.

The opening of Parliament on Tuesday, January 24th, by the Queen in person, was as usual a brilliant spectacle; and the crowding of peeresses and distinguished lady visitors was even greater than usual, the ample dimensions of crinoline rendering abortive all attempts on the part of the presiding official to close up the ranks by his peremptory "Move on, ladies," till refuge was at length taken on the benches of the peers themselves.

Our gracious Queen, echoing the wishes and will of her people, spoke out clearly and nnmistakably upon the Italian question. "Whether in congress or in separate negotiation, I shall endeavor to obtain for the people of Italy freedom from foreign interference by force of arms in their internal concerns, and I trust that the affairs of the Italian peninsula may be peacefully and satisfactorily settled."

The long talked-of Reform Bill stands at the head of the legislative programme, and will be brought forward almost immediately. God be thanked for the harmony and prosperity at home which enables us to address ourselves, as the royal speech says, "to the improvement of our jurisprudence" and "the further fusion of law and equity."

Westminster Abbey numbers yet another illustrious name among its honored dead, "The Right Honorable Thomas Babington Macaulay, Baron Macaulay of Rothwell, born 25th October, 1800, died 28th December, 1859," having been there buried with the honors due to statesman, historian, and poet, January 9th, 1860.

There is yet another tragedy to record in connection with the unfortunate "Great Eastern," her commander, Captain Harrison, having lost his life by the upsetting of her gig in a squall on the Southampton waters, while on his way to the ship on the morning of Saturday, January 21st. If sailors be the superstitious race universally believed, it will not be easy to find a crew willing to sail in the big ship when (if ever) she is completed.