THE

ENGLISH WOMAN'S JOURNAL.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

VOL. V. May 1, 1860. No. 27.

XXIII.—MEDICINE AS A PROFESSION FOR WOMEN.*

IN inviting consideration to the subject of medicine as an occupation for women, it is not a simple theory that we wish to present, but the results of practical experience. For fourteen years we have been students of medicine; for eight years we have been engaged in the practice of our profession in New York; and during the last five years have, in addition, been actively occupied in the support of a medical charity. We may therefore venture to speak with some certainty on this subject; and we are supported by the earnest sympathy of large numbers of intelligent women, both in England and America, in presenting this subject for the first time to the public.

The idea of the education of women in medicine is not now an entirely new one; for some years it has been discussed by the public, institutions have been founded professing to accomplish it, and many women are already engaged in some form of medical occupation. Yet the true position of women in medicine, the real need which lies at the bottom of this movement, and the means necessary to secure its practical usefulness and success, are little known. We believe it is now time to bring this subject forward and place it in its true light, as a matter not affecting a few individuals only, but of serious importance to the community at large; and demanding such support as will allow of the establishment of an institution for the thorough education of women in medicine.

When the idea of the practice of medicine by women is suggested, the grounds on which we usually find sympathy expressed for it are two. The first is, that there are certain departments of medicine in which the aid of *women* physicians would be especially valuable to women. The second argument is, that women are much in need of a wider field of occupation, and if they could successfully practise any branches of medicine it would be another opening

* This lecture was prepared by Drs. Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, as an exposition of the effort now being made in the city of New York to open the profession of medicine to women. It was delivered in Clinton Hall, on the 2nd of December, 1859.

added to the few they already possess. In some shape or other, these two points are almost universally regarded (where the matter has been considered at all) as the great reasons to be urged in its behalf.

Now, we believe that both these reasons are valid, and that experience will fully confirm them; but we believe also that there is a much deeper view of the question than this; and that the thorough education of a class of women in medicine will exert an important influence upon the life and interests of women in general, an influence of a much more extended nature than is expressed in the above views. The question of the real value to the community of what women may do in medicine is an eminently practical matter, for upon it is based the aid which they may ask for its accomplishment; and upon the position of women in medicine depends the kind and extent of education which should be given to fit them for it. A great deal of well-meant effort has been, and is still being expended upon the institutions which have been established for this purpose. Sometimes we have heard much discouragement expressed at the slight result that has followed from them; while, on the other hand, it is often said, "After all, it is a matter for women to settle for themselves, if they can be doctors, and want to, they will find the way to do it, there is no need of doing any thing in the matter." Now as I have said, we believe it to be by no means a matter concerning only the limited number of women who may be actually engaged in the pursuit itself; and it is also certain that to insure the success of the work it is not enough that women should wish to study, the co-operation and support of public sentiment is needed to enable them to do so. We hope, by showing the value of the work, to prove it to be the interest of the community to carry it out; and we desire to show the means by which this may be done.

Let me then say a few words on the influence which would be exerted on society by the opening of medicine as a profession to women. The interests and occupations of women, as they actually are at present, may be referred to four distinct forms of effort:— Domestic life; the education of youth; social intercourse; and benevolent effort of various kinds. All these avocations, by unanimous consent, are especially under the superintendence of women, and every woman, as she takes her place in society, assumes the responsibility of participation in some of them.

While these pursuits have always formed the central interest of the majority of women, their character, and the requirements which they make for their proper performance, have widened, with the advance of modern society, in a remarkable degree. Social intercourse—a very limited thing in a half civilised country, becomes in our centres of civilisation a great power, establishing customs more binding than laws, imposing habits and stamping opinions, a tribunal from whose judgment there is hardly an ap-

peal. All who are familiar with European life, and the life of our great cities, know what an organised and powerful force it ever tends to become.

In like manner, benevolent efforts have little influence in new countries, but in Europe, especially in England, the extent of such work, and the amount of it which is done by women would be incredible, did we not see here, in our midst, the commencement of a similar state of things.

Domestic life is not less affected by the growth of the age; the position and duties of the mother of a family call for very different qualifications, in the wide and complicated relations of the present, from what was needed a century ago.

Now it is evident that the performance of all these forms of work, extended and organised as they are, is in its practical nature a business requiring distinct knowledge and previous preparation, as much as actual trades and professions. This fact would be more commonly recognised were it not that there is so much moral and spiritual life interwoven into woman's work by the relations upon which it is founded, and out of which it grows, as to make it more difficult to separate this business aspect of her work from her personal life, than is the case with the business life of men; consequently its practical character is too often considered entirely subordinate, or lost sight of. Every woman, however, who brings thought and conscience to the performance of every-day duties, soon realises it in her own experience. The wider the view she takes of life, the higher her ideal of her domestic and social relations, the more keenly she will feel the need of knowledge with regard to this matter of fact basis upon which they rest. The first and most important point in which she will feel the want of this previous training will be in her ignorance of physiological and sanitary science, in their application to practical life; of the laws of health and physical and mental development; of the connection between moral and physical conditions, and the influences which our social and domestic life exert upon us. These and similar questions will meet her at every step, from the commencement of her maternal life, when the care of young children and of her own health bring to her a thousand subjects of perplexity, to the close of her career, when her children, assuming their positions as men and women, look to her as their natural counsellor.

It may be said, at first sight, that in these things it is not so much knowledge as common sense and earnestness that are wanted; that as health is the natural condition, it will be secured by simply using our judgment in not positively disregarding what our natural instincts teach us in regard to our lives. This would be true if civilisation were a simple state directed by instinct; but every advance in social progress removes us more and more from the guidance of instinct, obliging us to depend upon reason for the assurance that our habits are really in accordance with the laws of

health, and compelling us to guard against the sacrifice of our physical or moral nature while pursuing the ends of civilisation.

From the fact, then, that our lives must be directed more by reason than instinct, arises at once the necessity for a science of health, and that comprehension of it which will lead to its daily application. Take in illustration the simplest physical need, that which is most completely instinctive in its character—the question of food. Animals make no mistake on this point, being governed infallibly by instinct, but what conflicting theories it has given rise to among men! It is very rare to find among women, the heads of families, any clear idea of what are the requisites for a healthy table; and what is true of this very simple material want is still more so with regard to higher questions of physical law, those more intimately connected with the intellect and affections, and the family and social relations growing out of them. Nothing is more striking in a wide observation of daily life than the utter insufficiency of simple common sense to secure wise action in these matters. Numbers of people, of very good common sense in other things, violate the fundamental laws of health without knowing it; and when they think upon the subject they are just as likely to follow some crude popular theory as to find out the truth.

That progress is needed in sanitary matters is widely admitted; sanitary conventions are held; the medical profession and the press are constantly calling attention to defects of public and private hygiene, pointing out the high rate of mortality amongst children, etc.; but it is far from being as generally recognised how essential to progress it is that women, who have the domestic life of the nation in their hands, should realise their responsibility, and possess the knowledge necessary to meet it.

In education, as in domestic life, the same necessity for hygienic knowledge exists. Statistics show that nine-tenths of our teachers are women, and it is obviously a matter of great importance that they should be familiar with the nature and needs of the great body of youth which is intrusted to their care. It is not possible that our systems of education should be really suited to childhood, training its faculties without cramping or unduly stimulating the nature, unless those by whom this work is done understand the principles of health and growth upon which school training should be based. Our school education ignores, in a thousand ways, the rules of healthy development; and the results, obtained with much labor and expense, are gained very generally at the cost of physical and mental health.

If, then, it be true that health has its science as well as disease; that there are conditions essential for securing it, and that every-day life should be based upon its laws; if, moreover, women, by their social position, are important agents in this practical work, the question naturally arises, how is this knowledge to be widely diffused among them? At present there exists no method of

supplying this need. Physiology and all branches of science bearing upon the physical life of man are pursued almost exclusively by physicians, and from these branches of learning they deduce more or less clear ideas with regard to the conditions of health in every-day life. But it is only the most enlightened physicians who do this work for themselves; a very large proportion of the profession, who are well acquainted with the bearing of this learning upon disease, would find it a difficult matter to show its relation to the prevention of disease, and the securing of health, by its application to daily life. If this be the case with regard to physicians, it must evidently be impossible to give to the majority of women the wide scientific training that would enable them from their own knowledge to deduce practical rules of guidance. This must be done by those whose avocations require wide scientific knowledge—by physicians. Yet the medical profession is at present too far removed from the life of women; they regard these subjects from such a different stand-point that they cannot supply the want. The application of scientific knowledge to women's necessities in actual life can only be done by women who possess at once the scientific learning of the physician, and as women a thorough acquaintance with women's requirements—that is, by women physicians.

That this connecting link between the science of the medical profession and the every-day life of women is needed, is proved by the fact that during the years that scientific knowledge has been accumulating in the hands of physicians, while it has revolutionised the science of medicine, it has had so little direct effect upon domestic life. Twenty years ago, as now, their opinion was strongly expressed with regard to the defects in the adaptation of modern life and education to the physical well-being of society, and particularly of its injurious results to women. Yet, as far as these latter are concerned, no change has been effected. In all such points women are far more influenced by the opinions of society at large, and of their elder women friends, than by their physician, and this arises from the fact that physicians are too far removed from women's life; they can criticise but not guide it. On the other hand, it is curious to observe that, as within the last few years the attention of a considerable number of women has been turned to medicine, the first use they have made of it has been to establish a class of lectures on physiology and hygiene for women. They are scattered all over the country; the lectures are generally as crude and unsatisfactory as the medical education out of which they have sprung; but the impulse is worthy of note, as showing the instinctive perception of women, as soon as they acquire even a slight acquaintance with these subjects, how directly they bear upon the interests of women, and the inclination which exists to attempt, at least, to apply them to their needs. As teachers, then, to diffuse among women the physiological and sanitary knowledge which they need, we find the first work for women physicians.

The next point of interest to be noticed is the connection of women with public charities and benevolent institutions.

In all civilised nations women have always taken an active share in these charities; indeed, if we include those employed in the subordinate duties of nurses, matrons, etc., the number of women actually engaged would much outnumber that of men. How large a part of the character of these institutions, and of the influence exerted by them upon society, is dependent upon this great body of women employed in them and connected with them, may readily be imagined. Yet it is certain, and admitted by all who have any acquaintance with the matter, that this influence at present is far from being a good one. It is well known how much the efficiency of women as managers or supporters of public institutions is impaired by the lack of knowledge and practical tact to second their zeal; and business men who have dealings with them in these relations are very apt to regard them as troublesome and uncertain allies, rather than as efficient co-workers. With those employed in the active care of the institutions the case is still worse; the very term hospital nurse conveys the idea of belonging to a degraded class.

How to obviate this great evil has become an important question. In England, where all public institutions,. hospitals—civil and military—workhouses, houses for reformation, prisons, penitentiaries, etc., form a great system, dealing with the poorer classes to an immense extent, and having a social importance too serious to be overlooked, the question has assumed sufficient weight to be discussed earnestly by government and the public at large.

In Catholic countries this is accomplished to a certain extent—that is, so far as the domestic and nursing departments are concerned—by the religious orders, the sisters of charity and others. Every one who is familiar with such institutions must have been struck by the contrast between the continental and English hospitals, etc., caused by this one thing, by the cheerful and respectable home-like air of well-managed French establishments, as compared with the gloomy, common aspect of even wealthy English or American charities; and must have observed the salutary influence upon patients, students, and all connected with these places, of the presence and constant superintendence of women who, instead of being entirely common and subordinate, are universally regarded with respect and confidence, and by the poorer classes almost with veneration.

It is very common among both Catholics and Protestants to consider these sisterhoods as the result entirely of religious enthusiasm, and to assert that large bodies of women can only be induced to accept these occupations, and carry them out in this efficient manner, from this motive. When efforts have been made in England and Germany to establish anything of the kind among Protestants, it is always to the religious element that the appeal has been made. Many such efforts have been made, with more or less success, in

Germany. In England, the results have been very imperfect, and have entirely failed to secure anything approaching in practical efficiency to the Catholic sisterhoods.

Now these failures are very easily comprehended by any one who has seen much of these sisters in actual work, for such persons will soon perceive that the practical success of these orders does not depend upon religious enthusiasm, but upon an excellent business organisation. Religious feeling there is among them, and it is an important aid in filling their ranks and keeping up their interest; but the real secret of their success is in the excellent opening afforded by them for all classes of women to a useful and respected social life. The inferior sisters are plain, decent women, nothing more, to whom the opportunity of earning a support, the companionship, protection, and interest afforded by being members of a respected order, and the prospect of a certain provision for age, are the more powerful ties to the work, from the fact that they are generally without means, or very near connections, and would find it difficult to obtain a better or so good a living. The superior sisters are usually women of character and education, who, from want of family ties, misfortune, or need of occupation, find themselves lonely or unhappy in ordinary life; and to them the church, with its usual sagacity in availing itself of all talents, opens the attractive prospect of active occupation, personal standing and authority, social respect, and the companionship of intelligent coworkers, both men and women—the feeling of belonging to the world, in fact, instead of a crippled and isolated life. For though it is common to speak of the sisters as renouncing the world, the fact is, that the members of these sisterhoods have a far more active participation in the interests of life than most of them had before. No one can fully realise the effect this has upon them, unless they have at once seen them at their work, and are aware how welcome to great numbers of women would be an active, useful life, free from pecuniary cares, offering sympathy and companionship in work and social standing to all its members, with scope for all talents, from the poorest drudge to the intelligent and educated woman—an offer so welcome as to be quite sufficient to overcome the want of attraction in the work itself at first sight.

As we have said, every effort so far to introduce a corresponding class of women into English institutions has proved a failure, for there is no such organisation in external life in Protestant churches as there is in the Catholic; it is contrary to the genius of the nation; and the same results would certainly follow in America.

The only way to meet the difficulty, to give a centre to women who are interested in such efforts, and to connect intelligent women with these institutions, is to introduce women into them as physicians. If all public charities were open to *well* educated women physicians, they would exert upon them the same valuable influence that is secured by the presence and services of the superiors of

these orders; they would bring in a more respectable class of nurses and train them, which no men can do; they would supervise the domestic arrangements, and give the higher tone of womanly influence so greatly needed.

They would be at the same time a connecting link between these establishments and women in general life, enlisting their interest and active services in their behalf, far more effectually than could be done by any other means. A real and great want would thus be supplied, and one which no other plan yet proposed has proved at all adequate to meet.

We come now to the position of women in medicine itself. The fact that more than half of ordinary medical practice lies among women and children, would seem to be, at first sight, proof enough that there must be here a great deal that women could do for themselves, and that it is not a natural arrangement that in what so especially concerns themselves they should have recourse entirely to men. Accordingly we find that, from the very earliest ages, a large class of women has always existed occupying certain departments of medical practice. Until within half a century, a recognised position was accorded to them, and midwives were as distinct a class as doctors. Even now, in most European countries, there are government schools for their instruction where they are most carefully trained in their own speciality. This training is always given in connection with a hospital, of which the pupils perform the actual practice, and physicians of standing are employed as instructors. In Paris, the great hospital of La Maternité, in which several thousand women are received annually, is entirely given up to them, and Dubois, Professor of Midwifery in the medical school of Paris, is at the head of their teachers. Until within a few years, it was common for eminent French physicians to receive intelligent midwives as their private pupils, and take much pains with their education. They were also admitted to courses of anatomical instruction in the Ecole Pratique, and an immense amount of practice was in the hands of these women. The whole idea of their education, however, planned and moulded entirely by men, was not to enable these women to do all they could in medicine, but to make them a sort of supplement to the profession, taking off a great deal of laborious poor practice, and supplying a certain convenience in some branches where it was advantageous to have the assistance of skilful women's hands. With the advance of medical science, however, and its application to all these departments of medicine, this division of the directing head, and the subordinate hand, became impossible. Physicians dismissed, as far as possible, these half-educated assistants, excluded them from many opportunities of instruction under their authority, and in the government schools, which popular custom still upholds, they have materially curtailed their education. Nor is it possible or desirable to sanction the practice of any such intermediate class. The alternative is un-

avoidable of banishing women from medicine altogether, or giving them the education and standing of the physician. The broad field of general medical science underlies all specialities, and an acquaintance with it is indispensable for the successful pursuit of every department. If the popular instinct which called women so widely to this sort of work represent a real need, it can only be met now by a class of women whose education shall correspond to the wider requirements of our present medical science.

Moreover, experience very soon shows that it is not these special branches of practice that will chiefly call for the attention of women in medicine. The same reason which especially qualifies women to be the teachers of women, in sanitary and physiological knowledge, viz., that they can better apply it to the needs of women's life, holds good in regard to their action as physicians. So much of medical practice grows out of every-day conditions and interests, that women who are thoroughly conversant with women's lives will, if they have the character and knowledge requisite for the position, be as much better qualified in many cases to counsel women, as men would be in similar circumstances to counsel men. At present, when women need medical aid or advice, they have at once to go out of their own world, as it were; the whole atmosphere of professional life is so entirely foreign to that in which they live that there is a gap between them and the physician whom they consult, which can only be filled up by making the profession no longer an exclusively masculine one. Medicine is so broad a field, so closely interwoven with general interests, dealing as it does with all ages, sexes, and classes, and yet of so personal a character in its individual applications, that it must be regarded as one of those great departments of work in which the co-operation of men and women is needed to fulfil all its requirements. It is not only by what women will do themselves in medicine, but also by the influence which they will exert on the profession, that they will lead it to supply the needs of women as it cannot otherwise.

Our own experience has fully proved to us the correctness of this view. We find the practice, both public and private, which comes naturally to us is by no means confined to any special departments, and where patients have sufficient confidence in us to consult us for one thing, they are very apt to apply in all cases where medical aid is needed. The details of our medical work during the number of years that we have been connected with the profession cannot be given to the public, but they have fully satisfied us that there will be the same variety in the practice of women as exists in that of men; that individual character and qualification will determine the position in practice, rather than pre-conceived ideas with regard to the position; and that there is no department in which women physicians may not render valuable services to women.

It is often objected to this idea of professional and scientific pursuits for women that it is too much out of keeping with their

general life, that it would not harmonise with their necessary avocations in domestic and social life; that the advantages to be gained from the services of women physicians would not compensate for the injurious effect it would have upon the women themselves who pursued the profession, or the tendency it might have to induce others to undervalue the importance of duties already belonging to them.

This objection, the prominent one which we usually meet, appears to us based on an entire misapprehension of what is the great want of women at the present day. All who know the world must acknowledge how far the influence of women in the home, and in society, is from what it should be. How often homes, which should be the source of moral and physical health and truth, are centres of selfishness and frivolity! How often we find women, well meaning, of good intelligence and moral power, nevertheless utterly unable to influence their homes aright. The children, after the first few years of life, pass beyond the influence of the mother. The sons have an entire life of which she knows nothing, or she has only uneasy misgivings that they are not growing up with the moral truthfulness that she desires. She has not the width of view—that broad knowledge of life, which would enable her to comprehend the growth and needs of a nature and position so different from hers; and if she retain their personal affection, she cannot acquire that trustful confidence which would enable her to be the guardian friend of their early manhood. Her daughters also lack that guidance which would come from broader views of life, for she cannot give them a higher perception of life than she possesses herself. How is it, also, with the personal and moral goodness attributed to woman, that the tone of social intercourse, in which she takes so active a part, is so low? That, instead of being a counterpoise to the narrowing or self-seeking spirit of business life, it only adds an element of frivolity and dissipation.

The secret of this falling short of their true position is not a want of good instinct, or desire for what is right and high, but a narrowness of view, which prevents them from seeing the wide bearing of their duties, the extent of their responsibilities, and the want of the practical knowledge which would enable them to carry out a more enlightened conception of them. The more connections that are established between the life of women and the broad interests and active progress of the age, the more fully will they realise this wider view of their work. The profession of medicine which, in its practical details, and in the character of its scientific basis, has such intimate relations with these every-day duties of women, is peculiarly adapted as such a means of connection. For what is done or learned by one class of women becomes, by virtue of their common womanhood, the property of all women. It tells upon their thought and action, and modifies their relations to other spheres of life, in a way that the accomplishment of the same work

by men would not do. Those women who pursued this life of scientific study and practical activity, so different from woman's domestic and social life and yet so closely connected with it, could not fail to regard these avocations from a fresh stand-point, and to see in a new light the noble possibilities which the position of woman opens to her; and though they may be few in number, they will be enough to form a new element, another channel by which women in general may draw in and apply to their own needs the active life of the age.

We have now briefly considered the most important grounds on which the opening of the profession of medicine to women is an object of value to society in general, and consequently having a claim upon the public for aid in its accomplishment. Let us now state briefly what are the means needed for this purpose.

The first requirement for a good medical education is, that it be practical, *i. e.*, that the actual care of the sick, and observation by the bedside, should be its foundation. For this reason, it must be given in connection with a hospital. This essential condition is equally required for the more limited training of the nurse, which, though perfectly distinct in character and object from that of the physician, agrees with it in this one point of its practical nature. In Europe, the shortest period of study required for a physician's degree is four years, and at least ten months of each year must be spent in attendance upon the course of instruction. This course comprises not only lectures on the different branches of medicine, but thorough practical study of chemistry, botany, anatomy, etc., in the laboratory, gardens, museums, etc. Attendance on the hospitals is also required, where, for several years, the student is occupied with subordinate medical and surgical duty. This hospital training is the foundation of their education, and the lectures are illustrative of it, not a substitute for it. In England, no medical school can confer a degree that has not attached to it a hospital of as many as one hundred beds. And in many of the best schools, as that of St. Bartholomew's, of London, the college department will only number forty or fifty students, who perform all the assistants' duty of a hospital of five hundred beds, with an out practice of eighty thousand patients annually. In America, though so extensive and thorough an education is not legally required, yet all students who attain any standing in the profession pass through essentially the same course, because nothing short of it will enable them to meet the responsibilities of practice with success.

The chief difficulty in the way of women students at present is, as it always has been, the impossibility of obtaining practical instruction. There is not in America a single hospital or dispensary to which women can gain admittance, except the limited opportunities that have been obtained in connection with the New York Infirmary. This difficulty met us during our own studies, and we were obliged to spend several years in Europe to obtain the

facilities we needed. Even there, no provision is made for the admission of women, but there are so many great hospitals in both London and Paris that only those distinctly connected with medical schools are crowded with students. There are many large institutions attended by distinguished physicians, comparatively little frequented by them, and in these a lady, with good introductions, can, if she will give the time and patience, find good opportunities for study.

This troublesome and expensive method is still the only way in which a woman can obtain anything that deserves to be called a medical education, but it is evidently beyond the means of the majority of women. The instruction that they have hitherto been able to obtain in the few medical schools which have received them has been purely theoretical. It consists simply of courses of lectures, the students being rigorously excluded from the hospitals of the city, which are only open to men. Some three hundred women have attended lectures in these schools, the majority of them being intelligent young women, who would probably have been teachers had they not chosen this profession. They enter the schools with very little knowledge of the amount and kind of preparation necessary, supposing that by spending two or three winters in the prescribed studies they will be qualified to begin practice, and that by gaining experience in practice itself they will gradually work their way to success. It is not until they leave college, and attempt, alone and unaided, the work of practice that they realise how utterly insufficient their education is to enable them to acquire and support the standing of a physician. Most of them, discouraged, having spent all their money, abandon the profession; a few gain a little practical knowledge and struggle into a second-rate position. No judgment can be formed of women as physicians under such circumstances. It would be evidently an injustice to measure their capacity for such occupation by their actual success, when all avenues to the necessary instruction are resolutely closed to them.

Realising the necessity of basing any system of instruction for women on actual practice, we resolved, seven years ago, to lay the foundation of such an institution as was needed. A number of well-known citizens expressed their approval of the undertaking, and kindly consented to act as trustees. We then took out a charter for a practical school of medicine for women. This plan was founded upon those of European hospital schools. It is as follows: To a hospital, of not less than one hundred beds, lectureships are to be attached, for the different branches of medical science, with clinical teachers to give instruction in the wards. The students should be connected with it for four years, and should serve as assistants in the house, and in out-door practice. Amongst the professorships attached to the hospital should be one of sanitary science, of which the object is to give instruction on

the laws of health, and all points of public and private hygiene, so far as science and practical life have taught us with regard to them. This professor should also supervise the sanitary arrangements of the hospital itself, and should be the chief of the system of instruction for nurses. We believe that this professorship would be of real and important value, not only in giving the students a thorough acquaintance with the laws and conditions of health, and fully imbuing them with the idea that it is as much the province of the physician to aid in preventing as in curing disease, but also as affording to teachers and mothers the opportunity of obtaining that sort of knowledge which we have shown they so much need, and yet have no means of acquiring. In this hospital we would also establish a system of instruction for nurses.

This is a slight sketch of the mode in which we wish to carry out the three-fold object of the institution, viz., the education of physicians, the training of nurses, and the diffusion of sanitary knowledge amongst women.

It is evident that to organise such a hospital school would be a costly undertaking. It could not be self-supporting, for students are generally barely able to pay for their own direct instruction; and the hospital foundation, the apparatus for teaching, and the professorships, must be at least in part supported by endowment. It would require, therefore, a very large sum to organise such an institution of the size I have described, and it could not be efficiently carried out on a smaller scale, but could we awaken in the public a conviction of the value of the object, we believe that any amount really needed to accomplish it would be raised.

When we took out our charter we knew that, having few friends to aid in the effort, we must work gradually toward so large an end. We accordingly began the New York Infirmary, as a small dispensary, in a single room, in a poor quarter of the city, open but a few hours during the week, and supported by the contributions of a few friends. Three years ago we had grown sufficiently to take the house now occupied by the institution, No. 64, Bleecker Street, and with the same board of trustees and consulting physicians we organised a small house department. This year the number of patients treated by the infirmary is about three thousand seven hundred. Although the institution is much too small to enable us to organise anything like a complete system of instruction for students or nurses, we have received into the house some of the elder students from the female medical schools, and a few women who have applied for instruction in nursing. We have thus become more familiar with their needs, and better able to shape the institution toward meeting them.

Although we cannot yet realise the ultimate objects toward which we are working, the institution, even of its present size, is of very great value. In the first place, the fact that the entire medical practice of such an institution is performed by women is the best

possible proof to the public of the possibility of the practice of women, since, being public in its character, its results are known, as those of private practice cannot be. Secondly, it is already a valuable medical centre for women. The practice of a public institution, however small, establishes connections between those who conduct it and others engaged in various public charities; and from the relations thus formed we have already been able to obtain facilities for students in the city dispensaries, and in private classes, that could not be obtained had we not such a centre to work from. Indeed, so effectual has it proved already in this manner, that were it established on a permanent basis, we could, by its assistance, and our connections with the profession here and in Europe, enable individual students, possessing the requisite means, to obtain a good medical education before the institution itself can offer the complete education which I have described.

It is, moreover, a charity which is of much value to poor women, as being the only one where they can obtain the aid of women physicians. We have only been able to keep a very small number of beds, but they are constantly occupied by a succession of patients, and we could fill a much larger number if we were able to support them. Our dispensary practice is constantly increasing.

We believe, therefore, that, quite independent of the broader work that may be ultimately accomplished, in its present shape as a charity to poor women, as a proof of women's ability to practise medicine, and as a medical centre for women, this institution is well worthy of support.

What we ask from those who are interested in the objects we have stated is to assist in raising a fund for endowment which shall place the institution on a secure foundation. It has hitherto been supported almost exclusively by the subscriptions of a few friends, who pledged themselves for certain sums during three years. It has been a principle of management distinctly laid down, that the infirmary should not go into debt or on credit; that every year's expenses should be collected in advance, and should never be allowed to exceed the sum in the treasury at its commencement. This rule will be steadily adhered to, and no extension of operations undertaken until the funds are actually collected for that purpose. But so long as we are obliged to collect the income by subscription only from year to year we are not able even to lease a house, or make any arrangement for more than one year, but are obliged to devote to the work of its material support the time and attention that should be given towards organising and furthering the objects of the institution. New York is the true centre of medical education. One hundred and fifty thousand patients received free medical aid last year; no other city in the Union compares with this in its need of medical charity. It is here, therefore, that a college hospital for women should be established. We have been urged to commence this work in England, and offers of valuable aid have been made

for this purpose. But this medical work has originated here, and we believe that it is better suited to the spirit of this than of any other country. As America, therefore, has taken the initiative in this medical reform, let us do the work well.

I said to English friends before I left them, "You must send us over students, and we will educate them in America to do the same work in England." The cordial reply was, "We will send them over if we cannot prevail upon you to return to us."

Now, therefore, America must help us to redeem the pledge of education which we have given in her behalf.

Help us to build up a noble institution for women, such an institution as no country has ever yet been blessed with, a national college hospital, in which all parts of the Union shall join. Let it not be a name merely, but a substantial fact, wisely planned and liberally endowed.

Surely this awakening desire of women to do their duty in the world more earnestly, and to overcome, for a great and good end, the immense difficulties which stand in their way, will enlist the sympathy and support of every generous man and woman.

Help us, then, friends! Join the little band of workers that has borne so bravely with us the odium of an unpopular cause. Help us fight this good fight, and achieve the victory, the victory of erecting a noble centre of instruction for women, which shall be not only a glory to the New World, but a blessing to the Old World too!

THE NEW YORK INFIRMARY FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

OFFICERS.

President.

CHARLES BUTLER.

Secretary.

MERRITT TRIMBLE.

Treasurer.

ROBERT HAYDOCK.

Trustees.

CHARLES BUTLER,
ROBERT HAYDOCK,
STACY B. COLLINS,
CYRUS W. FIELD,
HORACE GREELY,
HENRY J. RAYMOND,
MARCUS SPRING,
SIMEON DRAPER,
CHARLES A. DANA.

R. H. MANNING,
RICHARD H. BOWNE,
MERRITT TRIMBLE,
MRS. HENRY BAYLIS,
" ROBERT CAMPBELL,
" W. H. HUSSEY,
" PETER TOWNSEND,
" E. BLACKWELL.

Executive Committee.

Stacy B. Collins,	Mrs. W. H. Hussey,
Mrs. H. Baylis,	Dr. E. Blackwell.
,, R. Campbell,	

Finance Committee.

Stacy B. Collins, Richard H. Bowne, Robert Haydock.

Attending Physicians.

Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, Dr. Emily Blackwell.

Consulting Physicians.

Dr. William Parker,	Dr. Geo. Cammann,
,, R. S. Kissam,	,, John Watson.

The following are the objects of the Institution, as expressed in the Act of Incorporation, obtained in 1854 :—

I. To provide medical and surgical assistance for the poor, and especially to give to poor women the opportunity of consulting physicians of their own sex.

II. To afford facilities for the practical study of medicine by women.

III. To train an efficient body of nurses for the service of the community.

The Institution was commenced as a Dispensary, at No. 207, East 7th Street. On May 1st, 1857, it was removed to its present location, No. 64, Bleecker Street, when the House Department was opened. During the present year about three thousand seven hundred patients have received medical aid.

Hitherto the Infirmary has been entirely supported by yearly subscriptions; but the Trustees now wish to place it upon a more secure foundation. They believe the permanence of this the only Institution in the country attempting to carry out either of the important objects above named, to be of value to the community. For this purpose it is proposed to raise the sum of fifty thousand dollars, of which the interest will be applied to the support of the Institution, while the principal is invested as the commencement of a permanent fund for its endowment.

The following gentlemen are appointed a Committee to obtain subscriptions to the fund :—

Stacy B. Collins, Esq.	Simeon Draper, Esq.
Merritt Trimble, Esq.	Richard H. Manning, Esq.
Robert Haydock, Esq.	Charles B. Tatham, Esq.

All who are interested in the objects of the Institution are invited to subscribe to the fund.

XXIV.—ELIZABETH VON RECKE.

Part I.

There are some individuals who seem born specially to illustrate the fact that

> "There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we may,"

so entirely does their course seem to be marked out for them by some higher power, irrespective of external influences, or of the desires and intentions of those around them. Their life is a succession of unexpected events; that which actually befals them being usually the very opposite to what could have been anticipated from their previous circumstances, while their character developes in the very contrary direction from that which any spectator could have predicted. Such an instance is presented to us in the subject of the following memoir.

Elizabeth Charlotte Constantia von der Recke, Countess of Medem in her own right, was born in Courland, May 20th, 1756, and having lost her excellent mother before she was two years old, was transferred to the care of her grandmother, the Starostinn* von Korf, a lady richly endowed in mind and heart, but yet inflexibly resolute in maintaining whatever seemed to herself to be right, and all was right in her eyes which was customary and conventional. As strictness, seldom stopping short of severity, was at that time usually looked upon as the very first principle of education, and, with little consideration of their bodily constitutions or mental peculiarities, children were indiscriminately whipped into their proprieties, the little Elizabeth was duly submitted to that system which trains by means of many stripes. A single instance may suffice to show the working of this family edition of the Draconian code. The child's nervous organisation was so delicate that she could never hear the sound of a trumpet, although she listened to it with pleasure, without such emotion as caused her to burst into tears, and this was looked upon as a naughtiness which must be corrected by the rod. The continual recurrence of such chastisement set the really well-disposed child's strongest power of will in dangerous conflict with irresistible impulses of nature; and this over-strained exertion, which on each occasion violently agitated her delicate frame, brought on a tendency to nervous convulsions, which could never afterwards be eradicated. The caprices of those around her, and other unfavorable circumstances, combined with this pernicious system of education to exert a very adverse influence on her young mind; till, just when it seemed that the most disastrous bodily and mental results must ensue, a guardian angel appeared, though in very humble guise, and averted the im-

* The Starost was a Polish official of high rank.

pending danger, by counteracting these evil impressions, and giving an impulse in an opposite direction. This messenger of good was merely a nurse, and a serf on her father's estate, but who, slave though she was, bore a noble heart in her bosom. She had been foster-sister, and afterwards waiting-woman, to Elizabeth's mother; and no doubt her naturally good disposition owed much to the culture bestowed on it by this excellent lady, whose bread thus cast on the waters was returned in a very unforeseen manner, for what had been received from the mother was now imparted to the daughter. The worthy slave was never tired of repeating to her attentive and susceptible nursling instances of her mother's mildness and benevolence, her readiness to forgive, and, above all, her piety and resignation to the will of God; often taking her to her mother's portrait, she would stand before it while repeating her narrations, and incite the child to lead a life worthy of this great example. To deepen the impression, she would tell her that though her parent was now an angel with God, she was still ever hovering around her Elizabeth, seeing all that she did, and rejoicing when she could relate in heaven that her daughter was growing pious and good; and the child's endeavors after virtue soon received another strong impetus from the morning and evening devotions at which all the inmates of her grandmother's house were daily present, and in which she was permitted to take a part as soon as she was eight years old. A year or two after she met with the hymns of Neander; their power and spirituality awakened a new sensibility within her, and as she gladly committed them to memory, their influence was as lasting as it was deep.

But while thus was laid the foundation of that piety which displayed itself in a character of great moral worth, with it grew an inclination to mysticism and indulgence in the lofty soarings of religious speculation. Asceticism became now her ruling passion; and this misdirection of her energies was promoted by her intellectual education being in some respects entirely neglected, in others carried on in a manner singularly unattractive to a young mind. There was a strong prejudice at this time among the upper classes, in favor of intrusting the education of girls to a French instructress, from whom they might early learn to converse in French; and when to these superficial language-lessons were added some instruction from a private tutor in religion, history, and geography, this was thought to be all that was necessary; and even deeper seeing parents could hardly make head against this prejudice, at a period when no better educational opportunities were offered. The little countess was thus exposed to a treatment but ill adapted to promote mental development. Her backwardness in French and in all other knowledge was often discussed, but never traced to its real cause, so that the reproach of it fell upon the poor child herself. The most amiable of those about her, with whom she preferred to spend her time, to the neglect of those who were appointed to take charge of her, at last allowed

themselves to attribute complete mental incapacity to her, notwithstanding her liveliness and amiability; and this mischievous allegation was supported on the other hand by the jealousy of those who could not conceal from themselves, as they happily could not prevent, the promise that the already lovely child would bloom into an extraordinarily beautiful woman, and would eclipse all around her. This jealousy could only find consolation in persuading itself that the beauty it so much feared would yet lack that expression which lends a living grace to loveliness of feature; so that in the unanimous opinion of her relatives, this charming young girl was but a poor shallow creature whose only attraction was outward beauty. Thus misjudged, any further cultivation of her intellect was all but abandoned, and attention was henceforth directed to the care of a beautiful person. The wind was scarcely permitted to blow upon her, lest it should injure the delicate red and white of her lovely complexion; only in a well-closed carriage might she drive from one of her grandmother's estates to another, and even then she was enveloped in a veil, through which she could only see nature, already dearly loved, as through a fog.

In point of moral training her position was still worse; for the ladies of her grandmother's household were accustomed to compel the poor child, by dint of terrible threatenings, or if these did not suffice, of absolute cruelties, to take part in intrigues, and to utter absolute falsehoods, in order to screen any misdemeanors that might be committed, from the censures of the severe mistress of the house. So soon as the wrong was perpetrated, the little sinner would flee into some hidden corner, and give herself up to her childish indignation, pouring out all the words of wrath she could think of against her tormentors; and then, in a paroxysm of remorse, praying over all the prayers she knew, one after the other, that she might make her peace, as she thought, with her offended God. Then would come the remembrance that the shade of her mother had seen her sin, and, in a fresh burst of grief, she would run off to her trusty nurse, who alone could console and soothe these stings of conscience.

Under such treatment and such influences the child reached her eleventh year, and then returned to her father's house, where her stepmother, a virtuous and highly-cultivated woman, received her with all the tenderness of a loving mother. The gentle child had entertained a sincere affection for her grandmother, but it had been repressed by continual reprimand and chastisement, till fear restrained all expression of love; the kind reception, therefore, which she met with at her father's house awoke sensations in her soul to which she had hitherto been a stranger. Now, too, she might dare to look on nature with unveiled glance; and the first time she drove out into the country with her beloved stepmother, and standing at the open carriage window, saw a stream of running water rippling under the bridge they were driving over, the novel sight affected her so much, that, in a transport of ecstatic tears, she threw her arms round her

relative's neck, and thanked her again and again for having allowed her so great an enjoyment.

During the first days of intercourse with her newly-found daughter, the worthy stepmother conversed with her on a variety of subjects, with the special view of testing her capacity, and soon found that this child, who had been described as utterly stupid and incapable, possessed in reality great powers of apprehension and such abilities as entirely contradicted this assertion, though she was still more astonished to find that her education had been wholly neglected, even where mere reading was concerned. She herself undertook to give her lessons, and had the pleasure of seeing her pupil make rapid progress. It was not long before she could read to her teacher, either in German or French, fluently and with expression, and this not only during the leisure hours of the day, but also in the night, when, as was often the case, her stepmother lay awake for many hours, suffering from an asthmatic affection; and through these readings, and the conversations they gave rise to, Elizabeth acquired, almost unconsciously, no small amount of historical and other kinds of information, only in fragments it is true, but which all contributed to add to her knowledge and enlarge her views. This intercourse, ministering as it did to the requirements both of her heart and her intellect, was to her a never-failing source of pure enjoyment, and in the gaiety of this sunny morning of youth she almost forgot the cold grey dawn of childhood which had preceded it.

Not only did the uninterrupted kindness of her stepmother fill her heart with sweet, reciprocal affection, but she had also a mild though serious father to love, and a younger brother, whose birth had caused her mother's death. Her father's third marriage had brought no children, but the second had given to the little Elizabeth two half-brothers and one half-sister, and in this cheerful family circle her loving spirit soon freed itself from the constraint which had been imposed upon it in former days; while as her affections expanded her mental powers strengthened, for the genial atmosphere of kindness was absolutely essential to the full development of so delicate a blossom. Never had a fair soul dwelt in a fairer form, and it followed, as a matter of course, that so much outward loveliness, combined with such rich endowments of heart and mind, should excite universal admiration; nor was it much to be marvelled at, that the homage she received should at first fill her young soul with vanity. Everything tended to inspire her with an over-weening estimate of herself, and to tempt her into a life of frivolity; but in such a soul there could not fail to arise some instinctive warning of the danger she was in, and the candour of a friend fully roused her to save herself from it. She was now fifteen, and being at a court ball one evening, in company with a young friend scarcely less beautiful than herself, had been conversing with Baron T. and another lady friend, the two latter having few outward attractions to boast of. The baron, remarking the triumph of the two young

ladies at the universal atttenion they excited, smiled, and said, half in jest, half in earnest, to his plain companion, "See, Lisette, how our friends are glorified in every way, while we, who are not beautiful, escape such dangerous flatteries. So it is with the world; a rosy mouth speaks charming words, and bright eyes sparkle with intelligence. We must *be* intellectual if we would appear so: they need not. But should we therefore envy them? I should rather pity them, if I thought they were so foolish as to believe that these wreaths flung to them from all quarters would never fade. A time will come when these goddesses will stand on the same level with us, when their words will no longer borrow charms from the lips that utter them, nor applause necessarily await them." These words struck like lightning into Elizabeth's soul, and blasted all her vanity. For some days after she could not regain her self-possession; every glance at her mirror renewed her shame; every mark of distinction suffused her cheeks with blushes. Yet so far from being angry with the candid man whose speech had so deeply wounded her, she rather felt grateful to him, for her heart spoke out a confirmation of his words, which she therefore accepted as a warning from the spirit of her mother. After a time she recovered her composure, but her spirit retained a tenderness which shrank from whatever could remind her of her folly and her suffering, until she began at last to entertain a sort of jealousy of the impression produced by her own personal appearance. She diminished the splendour of her attire, and chose the simplest style of dress; but she was still under the sway of vanity, which, though checked, was not subdued, a fact which could not long escape the observation of so sincere a self-inspector; and, by renewed efforts of watchfulness and self-control, she at last chased the cunning fiend from within her.

But she could well afford to give up the vain pleasure of shallow self-complacency. The love of nature in its highest significance, and the enjoyment she derived from music, united with the exalted friendship which binds refined souls in bonds of blessedness, made for her here in the far north an eastern paradise, where, fed with unforbidden fruit, love and wisdom grew together in her soul. Happy in the present, everything seemed also to promise her a happy future; but while basking in this serene atmosphere, the clouds were already gathering in the distance, which were fated to throw a cold dark shadow over her coming days.

Being now of a marriageable age, many suitors of different degrees of worthiness made application for her hand, and as it was not to be expected that her youthful judgment should be able to decide on their merits uncounselled, the important choice devolved upon her parents. If the selection were not altogether made a matter of mere calculation, yet arithmetical considerations were not without weight in their counsels; and besides this, the well-intentioned and otherwise sensible stepmother could not resist giving her voice in favor of one of her own relatives, a man of ancient and

noble family, and possessed of considerable fortune, but for whom Elizabeth herself felt less inclination than for any other of her suitors. Yet, ever soft and yielding, she conformed herself at once to what she knew to be the wish of her maternal friend, and the sweet romantic enjoyment of making a sacrifice for her sake, led her to suppress how much it cost her, and never to allow that repulsion to be visible, which like an instinctive warning filled her inmost being every time she saw him who was chosen to be her husband. She felt how far off she was from the man with whom they sought to make her *one*. He was a great landowner, and the government of his estate, carried on with a strictness bordering on severity, was the business of his life; and of affairs of this kind Elizabeth was entirely ignorant. His leisure hours were devoted to the chase, and he had not only not attained to that higher life which finds its chief enjoyment in the culture of the heart and understanding, but was an absolute enemy to anything of the kind; whereas, it was the very deepest instinct of her nature. A soldier too, from early youth, he submitted with difficulty to the usages of society, while refinement was her very element; so that in opinions, desires, and pursuits, they were directly opposed to each other. She understood nothing of the way of life of the man, whose helpmate she was to be; while he entirely misunderstood her delicate and spiritual nature; yet, nevertheless, as soon as she had attained her sixteenth year, she became the wife of the Baron von der Recke.

When the day for this inauspicious marriage had arrived, Elizabeth tremblingly pronounced the fatal "Yes;" then, as soon as the ceremony was concluded, ran to her mother's picture, and kneeling before it, vowed that whatever trials might await her, her own life should be pure and spotless, so that the eyes of her guardian spirit in heaven might behold her untroubled and bless her on her course. Then with the whole power of her will, she put a strong control on herself that she might hide from her step-mother the agony it cost her to leave the happy home of her youth, and to meet a new destiny, while dark presentiments lay heavy on her heart. Her husband could not but see how she grieved to quit her home, and still clung to her parents and friends, and this he marked with dissatisfaction, watching her tender farewells with lowering brow.

A few days after their solemn entrance into the baron's gloomy feudal castle, the young bride ventured to beg a boon of her lord, no less than permission to see a lady friend who had promised to pay her an early visit. The request was refused with a roughness which told only too significantly that he was determined to destroy all those home ties to which his wife's heart still clung. Surrounded by slaves, he was accustomed to have his every look and gesture obeyed; and when he found that he could not thus by the mere indication of his will crush out his wife's early affections and inclinations, he assumed a morose demeanor towards her, which in spite of her silent submission and obedience often became absolute op-

pression. Having been accustomed to all the joys of sympathy and to everything that could beautify and elevate life, she was now immured in dull solitude in this old robber-hold, and even when as a rare favor the sight of a friend was vouchsafed, it was but a show of intercourse, for her spirit was still held imprisoned. In this separation from all she loved, she sought the more eagerly the silent companionship of books; and Gellert, Neander, Wieland's early works, Young's Night Thoughts, and other productions of similar character were the cherished solace of her lonely hours. Through the consolation these afforded her she rose to that elevation of spirit, which, resigning the joys of earth, turns calmly to heaven and centres there its hopes and wishes. A hymn of Juliana Fleming's, as the production of a woman, made much impression upon her, and induced her to attempt exercising her own talents in hymn writing; but though she endeavored to keep this pursuit as secret as possible, she could not entirely conceal it, and it exposed her to fresh ridicule and mockery.

After three years thus spent in silent patient suffering, an event occurred which seemed to promise some amelioration of her hard fate; she became a mother, thereby acquiring an object on which she might freely lavish her pent-up affections. But fresh trials were in store. She had sought carefully to conceal the misery of her married life, but her husband now began to bring accusations against her, complaining loudly to her grandmother of her want of love for him, and of her propensity for reading. He knew that he had only too sympathising a listener, for this lady, in many respects so worthy and estimable, hated nothing so much in women as their "busying themselves with books," a fault of which she held them to be guilty the moment their reading extended beyond the Hamburgh newspaper. It was a fearful storm therefore which burst over the head of poor Elizabeth, when the extent of her delinquencies in this direction were made known to the terrible old lady before whom her childhood had trembled. Then, too, her husband's charges against her were mingled with falsehoods and hypocrisy which filled her with surprise and horror. The shock was too much for her, and her health gave way; a severe disorder attacked her nervous system, already predisposed to disease by its unnatural excitement in early years; still she contrived, though not without exhausting efforts, to maintain her firm and quiet bearing. No word of reproach ever passed her lips, for there was no bitterness in her feelings; the holy shade of her departed mother kept watch over her heart, and suffered no evil to abide there, for she firmly believed in the personal presence of this unseen heavenly witness of her life and its trials. She found strength in resignation, and fulfilled with equal calmness the hard duty of obedience to her rough lord and the sweet cares of maternal love. So far from the birth of his daughter having any softening influence on Herr von Recke, his treatment of his wife only grew more intolerable; and the charges he brought against

her to her stern grandmother became more frequent and odious. The bitterest of his complaints were on the subject of her invincible attachment to her stepmother and the other members of her family, an attachment which he pretended closed her heart against him. His hypocrisy wounded her even more than his ill-usage, and she was obliged to keep ever before her mind, what seemed the only redeeming trait in his character, that he was not a harsh master to his vassals.

At length, after five years of unresisting endurance, Elizabeth began to think that she ought to make some attempt, not so much to alleviate her own condition as to improve her husband's disposition, and, emboldened by an instance of virtuous courage which she had met with in one of Lavater's works, she dared to open her heart to Herr von Recke in writing, representing to him, in the gentlest of words, that, by his injurious conduct towards his wife, he was sinning yet more against himself than against her. His despotic spirit rose at once in revolt against this temerity, and, instead of reply, she received a command to withdraw herself, within a given time, from his domain. Elizabeth obeyed the harsh order, and retired with her daughter to Mittau, the capital of Courland, where she took an apartment in the house of her sister's mother-in-law, who intended to make her dwelling an institution for reduced noble ladies. Here she had to endure the incessant storm of her grandmother's reproaches, and the disapproval of even her beloved step-mother, her only consolation being occasional intercourse with her brothers and sister. A beautiful and accomplished young woman, still at the early age of twenty-one, the unfortunate baroness made a determination to deny herself the enjoyments natural to her youth, and in monastic seclusion to live for her daughter alone; a hard resolve, but one which she knew she had sufficient power over herself to adhere to. It was not for long, however, that the source of her deepest interest and comfort was spared to her, for, six months after her removal to Mittau, her child died. Struggling against the loneliness of her heart, the bereaved mother paid a daily visit to her brother, a youth distinguished for talent, who, sympathising with his sister, allowed her to share his studies, acquainting her with classical literature, and translating to her the most profound and sublime passages of the Greek and Latin authors. But she was soon called upon to resign this dear companion, who in 1777 went to the University of Strasburgh. A constant interchange of letters was some compensation for this absence, but the noble sufferer had not yet drained her cup of bitterness, and in the course of the next year this darling brother was carried off by fever. Childless and worse than widowed, with her brother she had still felt that one life-tie remained; this was now broken. "The last blow that could reach me has fallen," she wrote to a friend, "I have shed no outward tears, but my heart weeps. Nature itself seems dead to me, for all that was my life is

now beyond this world." No wonder that, thus bereaved, she allowed her mind to dwell on that other home whither the beloved spirits had fled. A belief in the possibility of a mysterious intercourse between heavenly spirits and holy mortals took possession of her mind. Previously consecrating herself by prayer, she repaired at midnight, full of highly-wrought expectation, to the churchyard, where stood those tombs, the boundaries as it were between time and eternity. Disentangled from all thoughts of earth, the pure stars lifting the dark curtain which hid from her the objects of her yearnings, Elizabeth sought the graves of her beloved, thinking that surely those blessed spirits would appear to her, or at least reveal their presence by some sensible token. But no sign came; disappointed, but not despairing, again and again she returned, always with the same result, but still hoping on, and for above a year she continued these midnight visits to the tombs, whenever circumstances allowed.

It was about this time, the spring of 1759, that Cagliostro made his appearance in Courland. Representing himself to be a Spanish Count, and a Master Freemason, he introduced himself in these characters to Elizabeth's uncle, who also was a Master, and thus Cagliostro speedily became on terms of intimacy with the whole family. Was it to be marvelled at that Frau von Recke, with her mystical tendencies, and her spiritual aspirations at their fullest height, should feel herself powerfully attracted towards a man of such fame, and who was reported in the newspapers and other publications of the day to have wrought the most wonderful miracles? Yet she was prudent enough to refrain from placing any confidence in him, until he had been fully accredited by her father, her uncle, and other men and women whose judgment she respected. In numerous ways her mind had been prepared for what was now offered to it. Several members of her family had occupied themselves in former years with chemistry, and what was then almost its concomitant, alchemy, so that from earliest childhood Elizabeth had heard discussions on the occult sciences, and on the reveries of Swedenborg, which were also a favorite topic of conversation in her home. Though listened to eagerly, they had made no more impression at the time than the wonders of Bluebeard or Cinderella, and the prospect of a ball had more attractions for her then than any intercourse with spirits could have proffered; but during the isolated loneliness of her married life, she had thought again, and with far other feelings, over all she had heard, while the reading of Lavater's Power of Prayer deepened and sanctified their influence. And now it seemed that Heaven had sent to her one who could fulfil her fondest and most daring aspirations, who could lead her through the world of wonders she so longed to explore, and initiate her into its deepest mysteries. The great magician was not slow to perceive that here was one peculiarly fitted to become his disciple, and announced that he had been sent by his superiors to found a Lodge

of Adoption, of which he was to be the Grand Master, and into which females were to be admitted. This announcement but ill suited the notions of the lords of creation at that period, and the ladies finding this to be the case, begged Cagliostro to say no more about the scheme, but he persisted, asserting that he had never yet undertaken anything which he had not carried out, and that those who now most opposed him would in the end be his firmest adherents. He then commenced a course of chemical experiments, followed by magical *séances*, in which he made use of Frau von Recke's cousin, a little boy about six years old, as "medium." Scenes well known to his auditors, but which he had never seen, were accurately described; conversations held with spirits; and even the departed brother's shade invoked and declared to have been seen by the child, though Cagliostro never could obtain for Elizabeth herself a glimpse of her loved and lost one, even in a dream; a failure which he attributed entirely to her own deficiency and weakness of nerve. By eliciting as much as possible from each about the others, and by strictly forbidding them ever to mention to each other what had passed during his private conversations with them, he contrived to mystify all with the wonderful knowledge he seemed to possess of their most private affairs. To Frau von Recke, for whom he professed a peculiar regard, the more flattering inasmuch as he entertained very little respect for her sex in general, he held out an almost certain hope of being elevated to the rank of one of the seventy-two disciples of Elias, who had power over all nature and who could rejuvenate themselves and others. And when she, for whom this life had now but few charms, objected that she would prefer not to have it protracted beyond its natural limits, since it would only delay her re-union with departed friends, he reproved her for the selfishness thus displayed, and drew such a picture of the mighty power for good with which the position he promised would endow her, and the wonderful blessings she could confer on her fellow creatures, that he excited her imagination to the highest degree, and filled her with joy and gratitude. It might well eventually cost a severe struggle to relinquish these dreams of ruling planets and blessing worlds, to return to the sober realm of reason, and be content with humbly doing one's duty to one's neighbour in this narrow earthly sphere. But the aspirant's fine moral sense was never for a moment blunted, and it was through this that her suspicions were first aroused, when, as once or twice occurred, the deceiver's mask of virtue slipped aside for a moment, affording a glimpse of his true character. When, after boasting that he could with ease melt small pearls and mould them into large ones, he drew back when she brought him her own jewellery begging that he would submit it to the operation that the proceeds might be devoted to a charitable purpose, pretending that the process would occupy more time than he could spare, she accepted the excuse undoubtingly. When he refused to give any reason for the commands he

laid upon her, to explain the unintelligible jargon he read to her, or to demonstrate the utility of performances, which, as she candidly informed him, appeared to her to be useless and frivolous, she would yet receive in all humility his reproofs for what he called her cavilling spirit, and was meekly satisfied with the assurance that as her mind became more enlarged she would be able to understand what was now incomprehensible to her low capacity. But when he spoke with evident exultation of having brought illness upon some one who had presumed to doubt his pretensions, she took alarm directly, nor could all his representations of having only executed the orders of his superiors, suffice to convince her that he was in the right, since she felt that if indeed he were commissioned from above, as she had hitherto believed, he ought to have as much benevolence as power.

The great object of Cagliostro's visit to the North was, as is well known, to gain an ascendancy over Catherine the Great, and to induce her to enrol herself among his adherents; and his special aim with regard to Frau von Recke was to persuade her to accompany him to St. Petersburgh, and so give weight to his pretensions with the empress. For some time she evaded this proposal, which had never pleased her, but at last found courage firmly to decline it, telling him that by his own admission he had not yet attained to such a grade in the magical hierarchy as would place him beyond being tempted by spirits of darkness, and that until this was the case, she could not feel it safe to trust herself with him for so long a journey. Besides, her presence would not be required at St. Petersburgh until he had received permission from the empress to establish the lodge, of which he proposed that she should be the foundress; and Frau von Recke promised that as soon as he should let her know that this was obtained, she would join him at once, but accompanied by her father. In all this, it was the magician's holiness, not his power, that she doubted.

After three months' stay at Mittau, Cagliostro found that there was no chance of acquiring any further influence over one whom he had hoped to govern, but with whose greatest weakness was mingled more strength than he expected. He therefore proceeded unaccompanied on his journey to St. Petersburgh, and meeting with no encouragement there, he retired to Warsaw, whence he was obliged to flee in haste, his impostures being again discovered. His exposure shook the faith of most of his disciples, but Frau von Recke still only looked upon him as unfortunate in having been tempted into the unholy practice of black magic. She ceased to believe in Cagliostro, but not in magic, and, still hoping eventually to overcome the barriers which excluded her from the spirit world, began anew her nightly pilgrimages to the churchyard. It seems as though some guardian power really watched over her, for in spite of an excitable imagination, she never met with anything which could afford foundation for a ghost story, while the soundness of her

judgment, even in the midst of all her credulity, is shown in the fact of her having never suffered her fancy to persuade her that her longing for a supernatural visitation had been granted.

A sunbeam was thrown upon her darkened life, by the marriage of her beloved and only sister with the Grand Duke of Courland; and no court formalities being suffered to interrupt the freedom of their intercourse, the princely lady was accustomed to spend many hours in her society, cheering her during days of illness by her liveliness and amiability.

Frau von Recke's belief in magic was sanctified by its intimate connection with her religious sentiments; she considered everything which threw doubt upon it as a profanation of the divine, and by an effort of will, could always restrain her strong understanding from exercising any judgment on matters which she conceived to be beyond the province of reason. Her faith, too, was nurtured by a constant interchange of letters with Stilling and Lavater. Both before and during Cagliostro's stay at Mittau, a certain Professor Stark had carried on a similar magic-masonic imposture in the same town; each professor had his adherents, and accused his rival of the practice of black magic. Cagliostro's fate in Warsaw seemed to confirm Stark's charge against him, and Frau von Recke now turned to the latter, who had founded a lodge of Freemasons at Mittau, at whose meetings he often spoke upon the connection between the outward and material world and the world of spirits. But even here, some of the practices wore a very suspicious appearance in the eyes of a pure being who only aspired to what was elevated and heavenly, raising doubts which could not be shaken off. Then, too, her conversations with men whom she could not but respect, and particularly with Neander and Counsellor Schwander, had an influence upon her understanding which was far from favorable to its mystical tendencies. The latter had long tried in vain every method to wean her from her delusions, but reason and ridicule alike failed; and, more grieved at his scepticism than he was at her superstition, she would beg him, with tears in her eyes, not to speak against such things. At last, however, he obtained from her a promise to abstain for a whole year from reading Lavater, Stilling, or any books of a similar nature, and kept her supplied instead with historical works. The errors, deceits, and prejudices, which she now read of as having prevailed in former times, made her suspicious of marvellous appearances in her own day, and her ideas began to gain clearness and consistency. But the work to which she owed her final emancipation from the fetters of superstition, was Lessing's Nathan; for there her spirituality could be nourished with reasonable and wholesome food. The force of the passage "Fervent devotion is easier than righteous action," struck her greatly, it entered her mind like a flash of light, and illumined all that had before been in obscurity. Cagliostro no longer appeared to her as either a white or a black magician,

but as a cunning impostor; and she abandoned a system which had added nothing either to her knowledge or her virtue. Restored thus to soundness of mind, Frau von Recke in 1780, fell into a bodily illness which threatened her life. It lasted for four months, and even when restored to convalescence she never again enjoyed her former blooming health, and longer or shorter illnesses awaited her henceforth even to the end of her days. Her infirmities, however, could not prevent her active spirit from interesting itself in the affairs of her fatherland, nor overshadow it with that depression and peevishness which so often mark the chronic invalid. Her moral system, founded on her own painful experiences, divided everything into good or bad, owning at this time (for it afterwards became considerably modified) no medium between the two extremes, yet her conduct displayed a universal mildness and benevolence, her severity showing itself only in her inward opinion of men, never in her behaviour towards them. All who were permitted to penetrate into her little circle, left it filled with wonder and admiration, for she was so unassuming and so free from self-assertion that jealousy itself was reconciled to her. That peculiar softness which suffering, patiently endured produces, was united in her with great energy and activity of spirit, thus making her an almost perfect womanly character.

(*To be continued.*)

XXV.—TUITION OR TRADE?

As this Journal is now the recognised organ of those who advocate the employment of women in other pursuits than those to which they have hitherto been limited, we consider it the fittest medium for conveying a few remarks, called forth by an excellent article in "Fraser's Magazine" on Female Labor, but in which the writer, by being adverse to the idea of women working otherwise than as "teachers" or as *influences*, (to coin a word,) has fallen into one or two errors; consequently certain fallacies rather than sound arguments are brought forward in support of his, or shall we say her, views on the question. It is pleasant to meet an opponent of polish and culture, in contrast to the coarseness of some of our few adversaries; we feel at ease to speak calmly and kindly, as with a friend from whom we differ on a few points only to agree all the more on those of higher and enduring importance; while we are sadly out of our element in an encounter with uncourtly foes, having to guard against stabs in the back or thrusts in the dark. The writer frankly avows that the question is one of the most sad and perplexing problems of modern society, but demurs to the treatment it has met at the hands of some female writers, who, it is asserted, have confused

the means of gaining a social position or subsistence, with what is inferred to be Utopian ideas about freedom, justly excepting however the well-known paper read by Miss Parkes at the Bradford meeting, on the Market for Educated Female Labor.

Writers here and there, few and difficult to find as needles in bundles of hay, *may* have ventured beyond the limits prescribed by even the liberal-minded; yet it cannot be denied, while we are thankful for the generous encouragement shown in many influential quarters and in tangible forms, that a narrower spirit prevails and in a wider sphere, whereby the mere effort to gain bread is encountered by the prejudice that still exists against every species of occupation not strictly domestic.

Home-life is insisted upon in a manner that may almost be termed cruel; for it is a fact, that no such life can be found for thousands, unless starving in a cheerless London attic, or sitting an unwelcome guest at a stranger's board, can be called a "home." It is to build up homes, to plant trees under whose pleasant foliage the worker may repose, that we demand space to labor in, and avocations for which we are anxious to prepare ourselves.

The author of the article on Female Labor selected for comment must excuse us should we err in believing that his experience seems to be more with the dead than the living; that books rather than men and women, with their social activities, their wants and their wishes, have been his companions; consequently the wheels of every-day life are not brought within the range of his observation. On one point his theory is as Utopian as any conceived combination of circumstances that has yet been worked up into a system and offered for acceptance to the world at large. We all have our pet opinions, our sure and certain remedies for whatever is amiss in society; and the dominant idea of our ally in "Fraser" is, that women should have leisure, ample leisure, in order to acquire knowledge from the pure love of storing up information. He complains of the contempt now shown by women for "leisure," wrongly, we think, as it is the other sex who, in their haste to be rich, scarcely find time to remember that they have wives and children and home duties that demand attention as well as business. Women apparently have too much leisure, while men have too little; thus, to the former, home-life becomes dreary and monotonous, while the latter have no home-life at all worth the name. Idleness is as sternly deprecated as any of the most earnest advocates of work can desire; therefore on this point we are agreed, our differences arising with regard to the nature of the employments proposed, and to the objects for which labor is to be undertaken.

The chief objection against the employment of women in industrial pursuits is based on the fear that teaching would be turned away from by many with disgust; and it is regretted by the writer in question, that the office of governess has been spoken of as less worthy to occupy women than some other avocations in which mental culture

is not so much demanded; and he likewise doubts if the sufferings of governesses be so great as is represented by us, or if they be owing to that mode of employment. With regard to the *value* of this occupation we have never heard it questioned; but it is indisputable that the numbers engaged therein enormously exceed the demand, and we demur to the dogma that all women are intended by Nature to be teachers.

To whatever positive extent the training of the young may be a part of woman's natural vocation, it seems certain that as yet the extent is either exaggerated or uncertain. The office of teacher is as truly a vocation peculiar only to certain individuals as any other speciality; and while we find some women fitted for the duty by inclination and ability, we meet on the other hand mothers utterly unqualified for its performance. Maternal instinct will doubtless always endeavor to impart some instruction to children of tender years; but while it is both right and natural that the mother and her offspring should associate together, it is too often found that parental partiality blinds the mother-teacher to the true interests of her children, and in some instances the mother only cares to amuse herself with them, while the work of instruction devolves on others.

It may be admitted that only the few are even properly qualified by education for the office of teacher; yet there must likewise be taken into account the amount of instruction demanded, in consequence of the variety of accomplishments required to be taught, besides the constant superintendence of pupils: tasks notoriously greater than can be efficiently performed by one woman, who is thus expected to train, educate, and take entire charge, not merely of one or two pupils, but sometimes of half-a-dozen, and frequently at a very low scale of remuneration. No tutor is ever asked to undertake this "Jack-of-all-trades" position, neither were he asked would he be found qualified to do so. It is only women who are expected to be able to perform these sorts of feats. In the case of female education there may be less that is worth the name of teaching, but this has nothing to do with the actual labor demanded—the constant whirring of the mental mill-wheel. It would be better both for teacher and pupil, if the instruction to be imparted were of a nature that would necessitate a little more vigorous working of the mental faculties; the exertion might be greater for a time, but there would not be that incessant "much ado about nothing," which produces, in the long-run, ennui, weariness, and indolence. A change of opinion in this direction cannot, we think, be regretted; on the contrary, it ought to be encouraged, as a means of preventing parents from bringing up their daughters, no matter in what rank of life, no matter whether fitted either by nature or culture, to be teachers. Hundreds—nay, we may say thousands, if we include the little misses who call themselves nursery governesses, and take in all grades up to the really accomplished woman, from whom such miracles of tuition are expected—enter on this grave and serious

occupation for no other reason than that it is presumed to be more "genteel" than business. Thus tuition is undertaken by persons the majority of whom are perhaps scarcely qualified for the commonest pursuits. On this point, therefore, we dissent from those who persist in maintaining that teaching is peculiarly a woman's calling. As regards *training*, (which may be apart from mere teaching,) mothers are commonly understood to be unfit to be intrusted with the management of their sons after the early age of seven; and in the case of widows, where such care necessarily falls to the mother, it has been remarked that the boys frequently turn out either milksops or spendthrifts. But worse than this, does it not sometimes happen when the father lives, that the pet son is shielded by the mother from wholesome rebuke by concealing his errors, until the errors become vices, and the youth is lost, morally and physically, to the astonishment of the mother, who marvels how a child so caressed and indulged could turn out so worthless, while the father mourns in silence the overthrow of his hopes and the wreck of his son? To fit women, whether married or single, to train youth as youth ought to be trained, much must be altered in female education, and then it may be more correctly ascertained how far and how many of the sex are adapted by nature for this office. The miserliness of parents in connection with the education of daughters, as contrasted with their liberal outlay in the case of sons, as well as the inefficiency of female teachers, are well commented on by the writer in "Fraser," and here we cordially agree with him.

It would be an immense stride onwards in social improvement were the respective classes enumerated by the writer to whom we refer, to reflect upon the advice tendered them, and to take into consideration the importance of a reform so urgently demanded. It is needless at present to discuss the question, whether private tuition carried on for years by a governess be more desirable for girl-pupils than the hardier system of public instruction to which almost every boy is turned over after the tender years of childhood. We do not allude to boarding-schools, but to classes for general instruction, to which girls may have access while residing with their parents. Acquiring information is only a part of education, and is, in fact, the lesser and easier part.

Doubtless, in process of time, better methods both for imparting knowledge and for education will be found out and adopted; since almost every observer, as well as thinker, admits that our fashion, as now followed in the bringing up of girls, is pernicious. Neither is it desirable to dilate on the sufferings of governesses, or to throw all the blame on the employers. Faults there are on both sides; nevertheless, their discomforts and miseries are manifold, and therefore it is that we would deter, rather than encourage, the general run of young women from selecting such a career for a livelihood.

To emigrate, and seek in other lands the homes not to be found in their own, would, in a majority of instances, prove a wiser and,

ultimately, a happier course. The demand is now all for young governesses; at mid-life, when judgment should be mature, faculties in full vigor, and experience worth something, they are already too old to be in request. It is presumed that the young pupil makes greater progress under a teacher nearer her own years, and consequently the instructress is regarded as much in the light of a companion to amuse, as a mistress to instruct. Poor young girl-governess! one hour she must be playful as a kitten for the amusement of the children, and the next grave and demure as the teacher. How the later life of that teacher is passed the desolate attics of our cities must answer. Teachers seldom get married. Tuition is regarded somewhat in the light of business by the other sex, who as yet have a prejudice against taking those for wives who have been accustomed to work for themselves. A singular prejudice this, as one would naturally think that the woman who could help herself could the better help her husband. The writer on Female Labor states the average maintenance and salary of governesses and the wages of clerks or shopmen to be nearly equal; admitting, however, that the prospects of advancement to the clerks are such as the governess has not. This makes a vast difference: the clerk looks forward to a richer future, the governess to a poorer; for at the best, and with economy, the latter can barely manage in her old age to obtain the common comforts of life.

Our author objects that if women engage in trade, employments will be given them which are the worst paid and least promising to ambition. For a time this may prove true, but surely when women, by proper training and an education that can be turned to useful purposes, combined with an increase of bodily strength, (the latter, as all physicians assert, being far below the healthy and natural degree,) can render the same service to their employers as men, they will be equally rewarded. The system of men taking up feminine occupations cannot hold together much longer, as the danger of an army of idle women seeking pleasure or food at any cost is now becoming painfully apparent to all who have eyes to see or ears to hear. How the system of displacing women to such an extent ever gained ground need not be entered upon at length. One would be inclined to suppose, were the reverse not too well proved, that a scarcity of women was the cause of our having somewhere about thirty thousand men-milliners, stalwart youths and bearded men, discoursing sweetly about the beauty of a ribbon, or the elegant pattern of a shawl or lace mantilla. The evil *has* been introduced, but is now working onwards towards a cure. That the pride, indolence, and frivolity of women helped it to take root is highly probable. As the prosperity of the country increased, men liked to have richly dressed idle wives and daughters, and as no one courts toil simply from love of work, women were not averse to have it so. Now comes the terrible reaction. Men can no longer maintain the increasing numbers of women thrown upon them; and those who have long lived idly and

purposeless are at last compelled to exert themselves. This is one obvious cause; but many others could be brought forward were it necessary, which in this place it is not, as we are dealing at present with facts, and not tracing backwards the sources whence these facts come.

In connection with those who seek higher forms of employment, where it is granted that new openings should be attempted, the author justly observes that "improved education is the first requisite," and adds the much needed advice that "women must cultivate more steady practical sense, mental perseverance in acquiring knowledge, cool judgment, more accuracy and method, to fit them for paths leading to higher honor and emolument." It is useless for those who desire the improvement of their sex to deny that not only a part, but the majority of those who seek employment of *any* kind, whether manual or mental, are painfully deficient in the requisites demanded, and without which no progress can be made. And yet, it may be said, how can this be otherwise, seeing that coolness and judgment, method and accuracy in reasoning or in anything else, have neither been asked for, nor expected from women. Feeling and emotion only have been in demand, and to such extent that the former not unfrequently becomes maudlin, while the latter runs riot, hence the number of nervous invalids. In this as in common things, the supply, if possible, must keep pace with the demand; the life-blood, the marrow and the muscle, as well as the sacrificed reason, wasted and lost in these vain efforts to be all feeling, is frightful to think of. Give women the same wholesome training for acquiring *practical* knowledge as men, and they will prove themselves fit.

Practical acquaintance with details of business is one thing, careful mental culture by reading and thought another: habits of attention and order as well as a certain amount of thought are no doubt necessary in business; but if much reading, or what may be legitimately termed "mental cultivation," is also necessary, this has not generally been insisted on in the case of men of business. To go farther, how many men do we find pursuing knowledge for its own sake, without the career in view to which it is a stepping-stone, without the emolument in prospect which it is to bring, without the fame it is expected to shower upon them? Few indeed. Yet the objector to women being employed in trade urges this duty upon them, and insists that in such elevating exertions and brain work they will find their true position in society, as the refiners of morals and the recipients of knowledge. Would that it were the vocation meant for women, to float thus midway between heaven and earth; imbibing science, art, and philosophy as their natural food, and receiving from on high spiritual intuitions for the benefit of the other sex. The picture is charming could it only be realised. But are there not even greater objections raised against our efforts to be wise and learned, than there are against

our entering into industrial non-domestic occupations? Does prejudice not run as counter to this high conception of our "natural sphere," as at present it does to our taking up a very common-place one in the field of labor? Are we not told over and over again that much brain work is hurtful to the sex, that it destroys their instincts, and mars their beauty, until we are heart-sick of the nonsense?

It is a relief to meet with those who knowing that women *have* brains, consider it right that they should use them to any extent possible; and here we shake hands with all who maintain this just opinion. That all women, or even the *majority* of women, any more than the majority of men, will ever devote their entire energies to the acquirement of knowledge or study from the pure love of gaining information, even were it their duty so to do, we not only doubt, but feel convinced that neither men nor women will make the attempt. The greater proportion of women, as of men, prefer action to thought; and many women with this natural activity will, if a choice be offered, select any pursuit rather than that of teaching, if the said pursuit does not involve loss of "caste."

Another false idea to be combated, is the idea that to be a governess is considered less fatal to gentility than to be overseer in a shop, or manager of a warehouse, an accountant, or a government clerk. Girls who take up "the trade of teaching," do not enter upon the difficult work with any clear conception of its grave responsibilities and arduous demands; it is simply chosen because with their preconceived opinions of "ladyism" they can find nothing else to square with them.

None seem sufficiently cognisant of the fact, that unless they are in themselves by education and manners, by association with refined minds, "gentlewomen," (in the proper significance of the term,) nothing apart from themselves can make them what the title implies. No cramming of little girls or boys with elementary knowledge, no thundering on a piano, no stammering at French or German, will bring about that desired consummation any more than sitting richly attired in a fashionable drawing room in placid idleness can perform the miracle, if the *materiel* be not within themselves. Our reasons for endeavoring to diminish the numbers of raw and unfit educators are two-fold. In the first place we consider that the few, not the many, are qualified by disposition and ability for the onerous office. And in the second place, we believe that by the numbers being lessened, those who are really fit for the duty have a fairer chance of being remunerated in a way that will prevent the risk that numbers now run, of being obliged in old age to accept alms either from benevolent societies or generous friends, in order to eke out a scanty living;* we do therefore, as the writer asserts, "wish to turn women (as a body) from the career of governesses, advising

* One hundred and forty-five applications for four vacant annuities have recently been made by aged and infirm governesses, at the Governesses Benevolent Institution.

only those to come forward as candidates who feel a vocation for teaching, and have by thorough training prepared themselves for it."

In this, society would be a gainer by an improved system of education, and many women would be made happier in consequence of entering into pursuits more congenial with their dispositions. Where pleasure is found in an occupation, labor is lightened and temper sweetened: whereas, when the employment is not in harmony with the nature, work and workwoman alike suffer; the work is ill done and the worker becomes soured and dispirited.

A common objection urged against women entering trade is, that they have no capital to begin business for themselves.

Were it the custom to bring up daughters to work, as fathers bring up their sons, we presume capital if wanted could be found for the one as readily as for the other, therefore this objection is not worth consideration at present.

The author refers with much anxiety to what women must do in order to follow out successfully professional life; but as yet we are not arrived at this, except in the cases of female artists or musicians, and even the former are only knocking at the doors for entrance into the temple, and the latter are still visited with a breath of the cold blast turned upon the handmaidens of public amusement.

"Women require a moral motive for much exertion," says the writer under review, "while to the more naturally active man a hundred worldly objects are sufficient." We doubt whether the compliment intended for the one sex is truly due to them, since we are of opinion that whatever fundamental differences exist between the sexes have been by position and training injuriously exaggerated. But without dwelling upon this, it may be asked why should women not accomplish as much through the *higher* motive as men effect through the lower? And if this higher moral feeling be *natural* to women, may we not expect to see it in the many instead of the few; and consequently that numbers of women upheld by this strong motive power would enter into, and succeed in, even the most arduous professions. Moreover, if society in the aggregate will not ascend to the elevated platform where this writer would have women rest in wisdom and virtue, would it not be well were they to descend and move about among their brethren in the busy highways of life, even were they to be seen in "lawyers' offices or on the stock-exchange," as the writer seems to dread they may be some day. That day is as yet far distant; nevertheless, were women *capable* of transacting business, which is all that at present the phrase can imply, fewer of the sex would be victimised and reduced to penury by heart-breaking speculators or unscrupulous lawyers. Truly a portion of the moral force so much insisted upon as peculiar to, and inherent in the sex, could not be more wholesomely employed than in seeking to purify the atmosphere of our money-changers, and in lessening by their influence the cases of fraud and swindling of late so numerous. The childish ignorance in which women are generally brought up with regard to pecuniary affairs, cannot be sufficiently

deprecated, as it tempts cunning men to deceive and rob them. This is a solid enough reason for at least giving them a knowledge of business, even where it is not necessary for them to undertake it as a vocation.

That women may be expected to be injured by greater intercourse with society and experience of life we dispute.

On the contrary, from extended knowledge of life, they would have their minds enlarged, and their powers of observation strengthened, thus gaining force of character to withstand the dangers by which they are now beset; and if their moral nature be as influential as the writer says it is, then decidedly their absence from public life is a misfortune to society at large. But, apart from their benefiting the labor market, or the question of money-making, we advocate work for women on other and even more important grounds. Women, as well as men, require occupation in order to maintain in health, body, mind, and soul. Not frivolous, useless, make-believe work, but employment for rational purposes; employment which, at the same time, admits of leisure, as opposed to the "grinding toil" which wears down the body, stultifies the brain, and almost extinguishes the divine light within. To preserve the healthy conditions of the entire human being, nay, to go a step farther, it may be asserted that to prevent insanity, occupation is, in many cases, absolutely demanded; and that many women, from this lack of active exertion, are *insane*, not perhaps to the degree of being sent to a lunatic asylum or placed under restraint, but insane as compared with what constitutes the *sane* state of a human yet immortal being.

The mass, whether male or female, have no desire to attain the degree of "mental elevation" so earnestly urged by the enlightened author. Contemplation, thought, persevering study of any branch of knowledge, does not appear to agree with the constitutions of the many. The "ologies" present no attractions; therefore, unless prepared to see our women become more luxuriously frivolous and pleasure-loving than they now are, or our fair, energetic girls sink into wan, spiritless invalids, other fields of labor must be found. We must give up our worn-out ideas of home and household duties being the end and aim of their existence, when, from the progress of material science, home occupation is compassed within narrow limits indeed. We are not speaking of the wives or daughters of laborers, but of middle-class women. The lower orders are compelled, from necessity, to work either *at home* or abroad. No parallel can be drawn, because had all the women of the middle class as much to do as the poor laborer's wife, in attending to her husband, her children, and herself, they would find themselves pretty hard worked, and for them no other employment could be wanted. Our remarks apply to households where there are grown-up daughters, who, unless servants were discharged, could not make for themselves occupation, even were it divided into infinitesimal portions.

To avoid any misconstruction, let it be distinctly understood, that we maintain the propriety of women who *have* homes and *positive*

work to perform, there to remain, and, if leisure permits, and they have the capability, to cultivate their mental faculties to the uttermost. Our author grants, that women as they are, with their imperfect education, are not capable of imparting *much* instruction to their children. We shall, therefore, leave that part of the subject, and only add, that there is so much *dawdling* over what some women call duties, that the sooner idleness is expelled from domestic life, the sooner women will attain a more rational idea of what duties are. A hardier system of upbringing, with training for some definite work, would eventually render women more capable of managing a household, governing servants, and educating infants, than they are now with an education which neither compels them to think, to follow methods, to observe laws, or, to come lower, an education which fits them neither for active wives nor working mothers.

We now come to what is termed "a feminine delusion," namely, "labor viewed as a privilege, and as a good in itself, exclusion from which is to be regretted for its own sake." The author asks "how women have contrived to take so cheerful a view of the penalty imposed on man when he fell from his state of innocence?" The all-wise Law-giver knew best what was for the good of his fallen creatures, and saw that, although man in a state of innocence might with impunity repose at ease in the Garden of Eden, out of that paradise idleness would be an evil and a snare; therefore, in mercy, God gave man work; and what is beneficial to the one human being is likewise a blessing to the other. In return, the author might be asked why he recommends for women even more arduous work (that of the brain) than is sought for them by the advocates of their employment, if he considers work a *penalty*, and not a good in itself?

It is on the broad basis of the principle that work is a good, that it is sought for women as well as for men, not from dire necessity, or as a mere expedient of the hour, for necessity has *no* law, and women, driven by gaunt want, must work or starve, therefore of these it is needless to speak.

It could not have passed into a proverb, that "Idleness is the parent of mischief," unless it had been proved to be so; and although, taking a superficial view of the subject, idle women may not appear so dangerous to the commonwealth as idle men, yet did our space permit, perhaps it could be shown that indolent or idle women are equally detrimental to the spiritual and mental elevation of the race.

This advocate of woman confining herself *entirely* to indoor and fireside occupation earnestly repudiates the idea of idleness; but limiting the sex as he does to "mental cultivation," for the one purpose of teaching, and as it seems to us that only the few will, or are able thus to employ their leisure, idleness *must* be the inevitable result, unless other channels are opened up into which the activity and the energy of the many may healthily flow. To speak of competition or rivalry with men in business at this early stage, or indeed at any stage, is wrong. As well speak of a few raw recruits rivalling

veterans in the field of battle. Neither need the question of wages be entered upon. In process of time these would adjust themselves; meanwhile let those women who are willing to work, either from the necessity of obtaining subsistence, or from principle, or love of useful action, be sustained and encouraged. When they shall have attained greater self-respect and dignity, (which *work* and not *frivolity* will promote,) then their influence will deserve the name, and it is to be hoped will be more widely perceived and felt, so that "*the young daily governess who takes her way in trembling* along the streets," (the words are those of our author,) "shrinking from the stare and compliment that insult her helplessness," and others of whom mention is made, need no longer dread our public highways as if, to judge from the terror inspired, they were infested by wild animals, rather than being the resort of courteous and kind protectors. It is amazing how fondly the eastern idea of the harem is still clung to in Christendom. Here is an enlightened writer looking with complacency on the pitiful helplessness and weakness which cannot walk or stand without a guardian to protect it from insult or impertinence. Our experience is somewhat different from those who live in constant apprehension of going through "ordeals" or encountering such "woes," all owing to a morning or afternoon walk. Any spirited girl can in an instant put an end to not-wished-for sentimentalities or impertinences, as the case may be, by handing over their "chivalric" admirers to the care of the police. These men are *paid* to *protect* girls and women as well as men, from every species of annoyance encountered; and if those who claim the privilege of protecting the sex at large forget *their* duty, why then call in the paid force. But, better far than this, teach women to take care of themselves, and public morality will improve much more rapidly than by keeping up the idea of "weakness" and imbecility. Were women wisely educated, as the author ably insists they ought to be, and were they to mingle with men in the non-domestic affairs of life as well as in their own homes, (where by the way, men are seldom seen,) their moral and spiritual nature might produce results that at present unhappily are not recognisable. Not until then will women, as a sex, reach the high position claimed for them by our friendly disputant, from whom we take leave with thanks for the earnest and able advocacy of a higher mental training for women, and only regret that on the question of the advantage to themselves and to others by their employment in other pursuits than that of tuition, we do not agree. Neither do we acquiesce in the dogma, "That though women are conscious of power they may not use it, if of ambition they must stifle it, and lead a life of acute suffering, cramped and depressed in the narrow circle of duties to which they are confined." God does not give power, gifts of mind or of soul, and at the same time forbid their use; therefore it must again be repeated, that with whatever faculties women are endowed, these faculties are given to be exercised.

A. R. L.

XXVI.—REQUITAL.

Loud roared the Tempest,
Fast fell the sleet;
A little Child Angel
Passed down the street,
With trailing pinions,
And weary feet.

The moon was hidden,
No stars were bright,
So she could not shelter
In heaven that night,
For the Angels' ladders
Are rays of light.

She beat her wings
At each window pane,
And pleaded for shelter,
But all in vain:
"Listen," they said,
"To the pelting rain!"

She sobbed, as the laughter
And mirth grew higher,
"Give me rest and shelter
Beside your fire,
And I will give you
Your heart's desire!"

The dreamer sat watching
His embers' gleam,
While his heart was floating
Down hope's bright stream;
.... So he wove her wailing
Into his dream.

The worker toiled on,
For his time was brief;
The mourner was nursing
Her own pale grief:
They heard not the promise
That brought relief.

But fiercer the Tempest
  Rose than before,
When the Angel paused
  At a humble door
And asked for refuge
  And help once more.

A weary woman,
  Pale, worn and thin,
With the brand upon her
  Of want and sin,
Heard the Child Angel
  And took her in.

Took her in gently,
  And did her best
To dry her pinions ;
  And made her rest
With tender pity
  Upon her breast.

When the eastern morning
  Grew bright and red,
Up the first sunbeam
  The Angel fled ;
Having kissed the woman
  And left her—dead.

A. A. P.

XXVII.—TWO CHAPTERS ABOUT CHARWOMEN.

Chapter I.

MY EXPERIENCES OF THE CLASS.

My mother cannot understand modern domestics and their ways of going on. She has been a housekeeper these fifty years, and she never thought that things would come to such a pass as they have arrived at.

Poor dear old mother! accustomed in earlier and brighter days to a respectable number of well trained old-school servants who stayed a dozen years in a place, who wore linsey-woolsey petticoats and blue checked aprons, only on Sundays substituting white linen

for the latter; girls whose best gowns, they did not call them "dresses" in those days, lasted a fabulous number of years and were then converted into quilts to last as long again; girls whose notions of respect and duty to their earthly masters and mistresses were only held second, so says my mother, to their duty to God. It certainly does seem hard for her, now she is old, to look back on such servants as she talks about and reconcile herself to silks, flounces, veils, parasols, and crinoline.

And, thus it fell out, that so long as we were able to afford one solitary domestic of the modern school, there was war between her and my mother, despite my intervention, on every subject wherein the ways of the damsel differed from those of her predecessor of fifty years ago.

Our house was a perfect pandemonium in consequence. My mother, accustomed to obedience, said it was not likely she should give in her own ways to these new-fangled notions; and the damsels, for their name in a short, a *very* short time was legion, though we had them only one at once, tossed their heads at her old fashioned notions, and *gave warning* to leave that day month.

It was almost a relief to me when circumstances at length compelled us to give up our single servant, and be contented only with a charwoman to wash on Mondays and clean on Saturdays. I reflected with immense satisfaction, that under the new arrangement there *must* be peace sometimes. If my mother should even alternately instruct and find fault with the occasional "help" for two days in the week, and then occupy two more in commenting on her delinquencies, I should still gain materially; for four days of grumbling would be better than six, not to mention the absence of that gay Sabbath attire which used to be so offensive to the dear old lady's eyes.

The first individual who filled the post of charwoman, pulled the same way as my mother, or, at any rate, never contradicted her; and, poor thing! her clothing was not likely to offend, for it was all too scanty and we were fain to eke it out by the gift of sundry cast-off, but yet more substantial garments than she possessed. Poor Mary! she was bravely fighting to keep her little children from the stain, as she deemed it, of pauperhood, during a season when work was scarce and the willing hands of the good man at home were lying idly across his lap for want of something to do.

So *he* was in the house minding the youngsters, and feeling his compulsory idleness far greater evil, both for soul and body, than the heaviest labor; while his cheerful little partner took her turn at bread-winning, and washed and scrubbed, early and late, to earn her shilling a day.

For two months we quite exulted in the possession of a treasure. Mary was cleanly, industrious, careful, *she understood the need for thrift*, and respectful enough to win my mother's approval. She was the daughter of Irish people, and herself born in the green

island; yet she ran down her country-folk most unmercifully. Certainly she was English in all her habits, and no wonder, for she had left her native land when only a few weeks old. Her quick wit and indomitable cheerfulness were all she owed to her Hibernian blood. By degrees it became the custom for her to tell us all the blunders her "man" made during her absence, and the pains he took to have things comfortable at night when she went home. We quite entered into her anxiety respecting little Billy's jacket, which *would* wear out before it ought, and speculated how long Jack's boots would last, or whether he really would have to grieve his mother's sense of propriety by going barefoot until "the father" should get work again. And my mother looked back on past times with more than ordinary regret, for with them had fled her power to do much for hard-working Mary and her five little children.

I said we congratulated ourselves on the absence of servants and the presence of a charwoman, but one woeful Monday morning, when the clothes were all ready to begin washing, I came down-stairs, as I thought to let in Mary, and found her little Jack instead. He had a sorrowful tale to tell. It was written in his scared face, all channelled over with tears and dirt, and he sobbed out, boring his grimy knuckles into his eyes the while, that "father was very bad in bed and mother couldn't come." This was the last hair. Mary's stubborn back was bowed now, poor soul! there was nothing for it but the parish, for she must stay at home and nurse the sick man. It was some comfort that she found a reward for her willing, ungrumbling servitude, practised from house to house. Her employers each gave a little aid to bring her through her time of trouble, and this sickness proved the "dark hour before the dawning." But we never had Mary's household services again. The good man got work and by and by a still smaller edition of little Bill appeared, so the house-mother's hands were filled in her own home.

We naturally, however, applied to Mary to recommend some one to take possession of the vacated wash-tub and scrubbing-brush. But she would not recommend, she would only mention her neighbour Peggy Flannagan, who said "she'd be glad of a day's washing."

So we lost Mary, and Peggy reigned in her stead for some six weeks. I fancy I hear her now, singing at her work. She began to sing, in fact she always was singing, within an hour after she entered our house. She was eternally "crooning" over old Irish airs, and now and again she would supply the gap which treacherous memory had left in the proper words, by tural-luralling, and tootle-tootleing to the tunes. Her voice, not unmelodious in itself, had a rather comical effect, coming out *in jerks* while Peggy was scrubbing a "flure." At such times it rather resembled a set of spasmodic bagpipes, if you can imagine such things. Two of her favorite tunes were "The Girl I left behind me," and "The Rambles of Kitty," and these melodies were invariably wafted parlor-ward

on washing days whenever the kitchen door chanced to be left open.

She, too, was fond of narrating her domestic trials, but certainly not a trace of trouble ever showed itself about her merry looking face. When questioned as to the number of her children, she replied that she had had ten children "*and the last one was twins*," and we are to this day in doubt whether she meant ten or eleven. She had buried six of them, she told us, and *then* a tear rolled down her cheek, even while she owned that there was often but a scanty supply of food for those who remained. Still she felt quite sure, she said, that if there had been more mouths there would have been more bread also. Happy faith!

But Peggy differed greatly from her predecessor, Mary. She was not clean in her person, and my mother declared that her presence was not desirable within a few feet. Moreover she had no notion of putting things in their places, but always left all her working materials in the apartment where they were last used. It was not therefore pleasant, when one wanted a sweeping brush, to have to sit down and think which room Peggy had swept the last, and so on with all the paraphernalia for dusting and scrubbing. But this was not the worst. My mother, accustomed to receive almost reverential respect from her old servants, could not endure poor Peggy's familiar ways.

I was partly to blame, for seeing my "help" lost in admiration at sight of my beautiful and much-loved piano, I sat down and played some old Irish airs. The woman was nearly wild with delight and could not keep her feet still, while I rattled over "Garry Owen," "The Young May Moon," "Norah Creina," and such like. Then when I essayed to sing "Erin go Bragh," she joined for a moment, and at last hid her face in her apron and sobbed aloud. I was rather proud of the effect of my music, which, as Peggy declared, had taken her back to the "owld" country again. I talked about the sentimental Irishwoman, and compared her feelings for her native land with those of our phlegmatic, unimpulsive English folk, rather, I fear, to the disadvantage of my own countrymen and women.

On the following Saturday, I was singing to quite another sort of auditor; for a handsome moustached bachelor was hanging over my chair, and seeming quite as much pleased as my poor Irish listener had been. He, too, had rather a weakness for Lover's songs, and I had just finished "The Low Backed Car," when I heard, first a vigorous clapping of hands, next a hearty laugh; and, lastly, the unmistakable voice of my Irish washerwoman, exclaiming, "There now, isn't that capital? I just heerd you singing *that*; so, thinks oi, oi'll just stale in, and whin she's done, oi'll tell her how she was singing all about swate Peggy, niver knowing that Peggy herself was close to the fore. Now isn't it a joke?"

She went bouncing off into the kitchen again, laughing and singing at intervals, and evidently quite unsuspicious of offence.

My moustached friend looked horrified at first; and I, thinking it anything but a joke, was fain to explain.

He laughed heartily when I did so, recommending that we should lock the door on the inside; for, he added slyly, "Peggy she may be, but *swate Peggy! !*" a shrug of the shoulders and shake of the head gave an expressive finish to the sentence.

Another night, when a grave lawyer was transacting some business with my mother, Peggy thrust in her head, saying she had been seeking us through the house to say "Good-night," and she gave a good tempered nod to the man of parchment, and, to his utter surprise, said "Good-night" to him also.

I looked at my mother's face and saw in the flush which covered it how much she had been annoyed by my *protegée's* intrusion; only the thought, as to how I should manage without any help, prevented her from recalling Peggy, and telling her she had no further need of her services. However, the climax was not far distant. The very next time we had any music going on, I thought she had departed, and had told my moustached friend that "swate Peggy" would not intrude again. I was mistaken though, for soon we "became aware" that she was crouching on the rug before the fire and on my turning towards her, she said in her most winning tones, "Ah, darlint miss, ye mustn't play thim tunes, unless ye want me to stop all night, and thin what would the childer do widout their mammy."

My friend could not stifle his burst of merriment; he fairly shook with laughter, and I, really annoyed, in spite of this touching manifestation of patriotism, beckoned Peggy out of the room and endeavored to make her understand that she was too intrusive. But she could not see it. She only knew that I could play the piano, and she liked to hear it; that though there might be an odd visitor or so in the room, there was still ample space for her.

Not that she ever pretended to even herself with us, oh, dear no! "More by token, she was setting on the carpet as still as a mouse, and would niver have spoken, if I hadn't turned round upon her."

But *I* could not be made to understand that the parlor hearth-rug was a fitting lounging place for Peggy when her work was done, any more than I could persuade *her*, that her coming thither uninvited was an unwarrantable liberty. So we parted mutually unconvinced, and my Irish washerwoman, deeming herself ill-used, declined to wash and scrub any longer for people who were "so moighty pertikler intirely."

For some weeks after Peggy's departure, I worked unassisted; but a severe cold compelled me again to seek aid. After spending almost as much time as would have sufficed for the work itself, I at last met with an individual who expressed herself willing *to oblige me* by coming. But from her first entering the house she appeared so anxious to impress upon us the fact that she was conferring a favor, that the sense of debt became positively oppressive. She hesitated about engaging herself for a future day, and very

often stayed away, even when she had promised to come, for such very trifling reasons, that we thought it was simply to show how dependent we were upon her.

Now, though I am quite willing to acknowledge the mutual obligation which exists between the employer and employed, I do *not* agree with my charwoman that she is the only person who ought to be considered as conferring a favor. I desire to treat her with all kindness, showing every possible regard to her comfort, and I expect from her no more work than I would cheerfully and easily perform in the same time. But when I scrupulously perform *my* part of the bargain, both as regards food and wages, not to mention much thought and care in order to make things easy for her and which were not in the agreement at all, I think she ought not only to keep faith with me if possible, but to abstain from hinting at the obligation she confers in coming.

It is not pleasant, as my mother says, to beg and pray for the help for which we also pay liberally. But it is worse for my kitchen helper to be continually reminding me that she need not go out unless she likes, and that it was only to oblige me she ever came at all. I do not relish this utter ignoring of her wages, etc., or her being quite deaf because I choose to offer a suggestion as to the propriety of dusting out the corners, or when I mildly hint that I should prefer her doing something in *my* way.

My charwoman No. 3 acted thus; and if I ventured so far as to urge the matter upon her attention, I did not like her to begin and tell me that her husband was quite angry the last time she was at my house, because she was not at home when he arrived; though he had on that occasion left work two hours sooner than usual. Moreover, she used to say, *in words*, that "He declared he would not let her go out any more for anybody." I said these were *her words;* but her manner said as plainly as though she had spoken it, "I know if I were to leave you just now, it would cause you some inconvenience. I am determined therefore to do things in my own way or not at all, and to make you feel that you are dependent on my will and pleasure, and that if you are not very grateful to me, you ought to be."

But if I were to detail all my experiences, I should never have done. I have had many good and willing workers; but few on whose punctuality and regularity I could rely. With married women there is often the will to be punctual and regular, but the many claims of home render it impossible to put it in practice. Most young women of good character and conduct are engaged as resident servants, not liking to risk the uncertainty of work incidental to a charwoman's life; and old ones are frequently addicted to snuff, and claim a prescriptive right to cold meat, feeling themselves injured if you put a fragment into the pantry for future picking.

Once a young woman was recommended to me very highly. I

was told she had been the best servant in a country town, and I thought her one of the most attractive persons I had ever seen. I engaged her, and for a whole year, wet or dry, winter or summer, punctually as the clock struck seven, twice a week came Elizabeth.

She was, I may say, a perfect servant, and thoroughly satisfied even my mother, who never interfered, frankly acknowledging that Elizabeth needed no instruction. During the time she was with us she exhibited the most singular fondness for a little orphan girl, who was staying at our house, and though we felt surprised that Elizabeth, whose home was with elderly people, should be so fond of children, we rather encouraged the little one's regard for our charwoman, because it seemed to make both so happy.

At last Elizabeth told us, with many blushes, that a time was fixed for her wedding, and we rejoiced in her prospects while regretting our loss. According to promise, I went to see Elizabeth in her new home, and to my utter astonishment a lovely little girl of four years old, and the bride's very image, was lying on the bridegroom's lap asleep. In answer to my inquiring glance, poor Elizabeth said, "She is mine. I always thought you knew, miss, but I see now you did not." The girl's face was crimson, but her husband gave her a kind look, and, bending down, kissed the little sleeper.

I gave my offering towards the new home into Elizabeth's hand, and then she asked me to go and look up-stairs in order to explain. It was the old tale. Her beauty had attracted one above her, who was that little girl's father. But, poor thing! she had nobly and honestly labored to retrieve the past, and, refusing even to see or receive aid from him who had tempted her from the right path, had worked day by day for bread.

"She had never intended to deceive us," she said; "she thought every one knew." She always believed that we did not wish to notice it at all, and of course she would not speak of her poor child. Her husband had always known of its existence, and I fancy had wooed her through the child, by continually showing kindness to it.

What a tale it was! And so hard to believe, for there was a purity of manner and propriety of speech about Elizabeth rarely to be met with. Poor girl! Her one fall into the moral slough had made her dread and hate the very approach to it, and I thanked God that she had found strength to rise and stand.

How easy it became to comprehend why she had lavished so much regard on our little orphan guest. It had been in Elizabeth's eyes the representative of her own absent baby, the recipient of a mother's yearning love. I felt—how could I help it?—a great esteem for this young woman, who, without in any way defending what was wrong, had struggled to regain the right path, and to win back not only the world's good opinion, but her own self-respect. I ought also to have said that her child's father was dead when she became a wife.

Chapter II.

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE FOR CHARWOMEN AND THEIR EMPLOYERS.

I should not have entered so fully into Elizabeth's story, had I not needed it to illustrate a portion of my idea of what might be done to obviate the inconveniences felt by those who need occasional assistance in their homes, to prevent any loss of time or difficulty in obtaining such help, and, though last not least, to assist willing workers in securing constant and reputable employment and fair remuneration.

In all towns of any considerable size there are many persons who earn the whole or a part of their subsistence by going out to work as charwomen. I myself know several young women who *live* by this sort of daily labor, and I have long thought that, if in each large town a Charwomen's or Female Daily Workers' Home could be established, it would prove both convenient to employers, and beneficial, in a moral and pecuniary point of view, to the employed. We have a Home for Governesses, and another for Dressmakers' Assistants; why not establish one on the same principle for our still more humble helpers in household drudgery?

In the first place, the unmarried charwoman or childless widow might, by the co-operative principle, obtain accommodation of a superior kind to the single room which her earnings enable her to afford, and that, too, at a less cost. The Dressmakers' Home has proved that such an establishment would soon become self-supporting, for the wages of a charwoman are often superior to those which she can earn who plies the needle for bread. In such a Home, too, the servant out of place, who has no home of her own, might find a temporary refuge. Then, instead of spending all her wages while waiting for a situation, and being perhaps exposed to temptations which make one shudder, she might obtain partial employment at least, and through it a permanent engagement.

Of course, one of the greatest advantages of such an establishment would be brought into play by means of a simple system of registration. There might be the charwomen's register, in which not only the names of inmates of The Home would be entered, but also those of the married workers who, dwelling under a husband's roof and protection, are still desirous of doing something towards the bread and butter. Such an individual might enter her name at The Home, giving also that of some respectable person to whom reference could be made as to her character and qualifications. Thus the registers might be useful to three classes wanting employment: the unmarried residents in The Home, the married who wish to obtain an occasional day's work, and the servant out of place.

To the employer also they would prove an immense convenience. Instead of having to ask first one neighbour, and then another, if she can tell where help for the morrow may be obtained, and then

having to tramp into some dirty court in search of it, it would only be necessary for the house-mother to apply at The Home, or refer to the pages of the register.

Then, too, if the charwoman's employer would, after a fair trial, give her assistant a character, or permit a reference to her for the guidance of others who might wish for occasional help, many others would avail themselves of a daily servant's services; because there would be less cause for hesitation about taking a stranger into the house were she recommended by respectable individuals.

Again, a lady wishing to engage a servant would often be glad to test her qualifications before closing with her for a lengthened period; and, perhaps, in many cases the daily worker would become so valuable to an occasional employer that a more lasting contract might be the result. And, if testimonials as to character and qualifications were duly and regularly inserted in the registers, would not the very fact of their being so conspicuously placed excite a wholesome degree of emulation amongst the various workers who availed themselves of the advantages offered by The Home?

But within the limits of a short paper it would not be easy to enumerate all the benefits, both to employer and employed, which would be the certain result of such an establishment as I have endeavored to suggest.

Still I must say one thing more. Many a poor girl who has made just a single step on the wrong path has been almost driven headlong downwards, because of the difficulty she has experienced in obtaining the means of earning bread. Would not a Daily Workers' Home furnish to such a one, erring, yet penitent, a chance to retrieve her position? From my own actual experience in the case of Elizabeth, and from having been an eye-witness of the manner in which four others similarly situated, have, by patient perseverance, won their way back to confidence and respect as simple daily laborers at the washing-tub, I feel convinced that a Female Workers' Home might be made an agent in reclaiming some poor girls who, though erring, are not vicious or debased.

And truly commiserating those who, like myself, have need of occasional assistance in their homes, and find great difficulty in procuring it without the expenditure of much time, which they can ill afford, I would commend the above plan as a remedy for the evils they have to contend against.

Even in small towns, where a Home could not support itself, a register of eligible charwomen, as well as servants, would be easily kept, and prove a great convenience. I leave these hints to those persons who have means and leisure for carrying out the suggestions of others, who, having neither, yet feel the necessity for something to be done to encourage still further the doctrine of self-helpfulness, and to reduce mere doctrine to practice.

R. B.

XXVIII.—FROM PARIS.

April 17, 1860.

To the "intelligent stranger" who looks leisurely into the windows of Parisian booksellers, few signs of the times are so remarkable as the number of works upon the position, the duties, the health, the beauty, and the moral nature of women. An English gentleman passing through the streets one day last week, was so struck by these books that he took the trouble of copying several of the titles in his note-book, and two points were immediately observable in looking over the list: that they were nearly all written by men, and that (so far as could be judged by the suggestion of their titles) they were *not* written for the perusal of women; of English women at least, who have no time to waste in reading questionable literature.

The total fact is, however, full of interest to every thinking person; the French have caught the infection of a new idea (presented *consciously* for the first time in history) from the Anglo-Saxon races in England and America, and they are trying in their own way to solve the problem of woman's work in the world. Very strange and twisted appears their solution to our English ears. I hardly know whether the conservative or the intensely democratic elements of French thought appear the worst to me! whether the philosophy of repression or the philosophy of licence is most injurious to the moral interests of society. Happily we in England are not called upon to decide so knotty a question. All I know is, that having asked numerous intelligent French people to indicate one book from which I might draw facts or thoughts likely to be acceptable to my own country-women, I have been able to hear of only one.

I find, however, in the "Revue Européene" for last month, a paper from the pen of a lady, entitled "La Femme dans la Societé Anglaise," which contains some excellent remarks well worth translating, because they afford insight into the tone of French thought on these subjects, and are presented by a refined and educated woman.

I must premise that the first impetus to this universal discussion appears to have been given by Proudhon and Michelet. M. Proudhon is profoundly opposed to feminine influence and development, as we understand those words. M. Michelet, the celebrated historian, is, on the contray, an adorer of women in the family and in society; and loses no opportunity of saying what he conceives to be a good word for them and their highest interests.

This, however, demands a little explanation; M. Michelet's famous works, "L'Amour" and "La Femme," which one meets with in Paris at every turn, were written with an avowed high moral purpose; the first in particular was written to persuade his young countrymen of the happiness of married life, and the charming excel-

lence of woman as a wife and mother. There is, however, an old proverb to the effect that some remedies are worse than the evils they profess to cure. Michelet's defence appears to be profoundly displeasing to the more intelligent among Frenchwomen. I will now pass on to the "Revue," the article is on Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, and is based on the memoir which appeared in the "English Woman's Journal" for April, 1858. It is the preliminary chapter which I shall abridge and translate.

"Melancholy truths are uttered day by day upon the destiny of women, as fixed by laws human and divine. Melancholy, because incomplete, these revelations are nevertheless valuable in spite of their extreme diversity. Each speaker possessing only one necessarily limited point of view, how shall we expect the French race and the Teutonic races, the reasoning mind of man and the instinctive conscience of woman, to come to one and the same conclusion as to the *rôle* to be assigned to women in the family and in social life. In all ages this subject has been discussed with more or less of gallantry; the novelty lies in this, that in the midst of grave political events, both in England and in France, people are simultaneously occupying themselves with an obscure social question, and that they listen seriously to whoever presents it with seriousness. Among us, in particular, the discussions carried on in all the journals have not tired out public curiosity. The recent appearance and rapid success of "La Femme" has given new animation to the debate, and yet none among the combatants have dreamt of taking up new weapons, of widening the field of battle, or, better still, of peacefully bringing to light a less known aspect of the same subject.

"I do not see that French writers have examined what England has to say in those philosophical, moral, historical, or economical treatises which relate to women. In calling attention to one remarkable fact due to English influence, (the career of Miss Blackwell,) I do not pretend to supply our vast omission, I only hope to show that it would be very useful to do so. But previous to entering on the question itself, I wish to remark how this turning of many intellects upon the destiny of women, exemplifies in its first steps the essential difference between the genius of the two neighbouring nations. Our thinkers have prefaced their examination of a special question by a general *coup d'œil*. The question itself has even only appeared important because of its relation to the *ensemble* of human existence. On the contrary, it is the observation of passing daily events, and individual accidental occurrences, which has guided the English to general conclusions; nearly always susceptible of immediate application. With us, they are masculine pens which have guided public opinion upon the woman-question; with them the discussion has proceeded from women, because the English demand, above all things, special competency in whoever treats of a subject, while the French seek rather for a warrant of moral impartiality.

"The English do not ask physiology to reveal the secrets of the feminine genius; they put feminine capacities to actual proof, in giving work-tools into the hand of woman. They begin on the lowest level, with little economical improvements, while we are mounting up continually into the ethereal regions of philosophy. Even a superficial examination of the practical results obtained by each method, will demonstrate, I fear, that our's is not the best; that is to say, the abstract thought represented by France has advanced more slowly in the good path of realising improvement, than the material interests of each and all as they are well understood in England. French writers in searching for the causes of disorder and decay existing in the heart of our nation, have found a thorough discordance between the principles of education, the tendencies, and the interests of the two sexes; and so great an inferiority on the part of women as is alone enough to retard common social progress.

"From this discovery have sprung, on the one side, optimist theories explaining the present state of things by natural causes and immutable laws; on the other, reforming theories embracing education, manners, and even legislation: theories made under the conviction that they never would be realised, and for this sole reason marked by a character chimerical in its general bearing, and puerile in detail.

"Lastly, the French people are still disputing, with modern methods it is true, the old theological question as to the nature of the soul of woman, while the English treat of what I shall venture to call the question of bread and butter. Should I be accused of being prosaic I should say that more sensible conclusions are to be got out of the vulgarities of the second question than out of the subtilties of the first. When the imperative necessity of eating and drinking is in question, all the world unites in recognising the principle that woman, as well as man, ought to be able to gain her daily bread by industry of a kind suitable to her feminine faculties. But the moment people begin to talk of the organ of *mental* digestion, the brain, all unanimity ceases, and the most contradictory hypotheses are daily hazarded without the slightest result. Whether it be true that the feminine brain, as some people have declared, cannot elaborate ideas, and consequently only receives to reject them instantly as injurious bodies foreign to its substance, (!) or whether the said brain is really attaining development and harmony as the world advances, it is equally certain that its nature is ruled by its own interior law. Neither on the one nor the other hypothesis can it be much affected by human ordinances, custom, or opinion. The law pounces on the hungry wretch who steals a miserable subsistence; can it pounce upon the famished mind which thieves those ideas it feels to be necessary to its growth?

"So far, therefore, as public morals and manners are concerned,

there is no use in pre-occupying one's mind, as is so constantly done here, upon the structure of the female brain, and the essence of the feminine soul, while it is absolutely and immediately necessary that the problems of material existence should receive some sort of solution. Why should they be disdained? Do they turn the mind from the ideal ends of life? Assuredly not; they lead thereto. The English have felt this well and wisely, and therefore they have not been afraid, as we have been, of lowering the domestic ideal of family life, by considering women as individuals, and endeavoring to make their subsistence depend on their own labor, instead of their precariously hanging on the head of the household, and being subject to his death, his commercial failure, and a thousand other accidents of life.

"Formerly, women deprived of their natural protectors were more to be pitied in England than in France. Things have totally changed. In spite of our sympathetic nature, which softens poverty among us; in spite of our convents, which gather together isolated women and utilise their intellectual and manual activity; in spite of other advantages which it would take too long to enumerate, it is a certain fact that at the present day English women possess more facilities than French women for the gaining of an honorable livelihood, and that which is a fact now, will be still more incontestable a few years hence, because progress is very rapid there, and insensible here.

"Why do we thus allow ourselves to be surpassed? Let us confess the reason to ourselves. It is because we fly too high, because we satisfy our instinct of progress in words, and because the French intellect will not descend from the height whereon it loves to dwell, to learn of wise people, each of whom would willingly communicate the limited results of their own experience, but do not feel themselves called to a warfare of eloquent words, and have no pretension to instruct the human race.

"One ought to be very sure of one's authority, before speaking in the name of eternal principles, as is so customary among us. Does any one among us wish to learn the interests of women? Let women themselves keep silence; they would inspire no confidence in speaking, they plead their own cause; only a man's voice, austere and disinterested, could make itself heard on this subject.

"Among our neighbours, on the contrary, they say, 'Here is a woman who comes to tell us of the sufferings of her fellow-women in workshops, in family life, in prisons, etc. This subject particularly concerns her as a woman; she ought to have fathomed it, (*l'approfondi,*) let us listen to her.'"

Here the writer proceeds to give some details of the meeting of the Association at Bradford last October; of the discussion on female labor; and the formation of the committee for investigating the question of the employment of women; and speaks further on of the lectures given last year by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, in London,

Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, and more particularly of their connection with the laws of life and health; resuming thus:—

"Far from me be the thought of a discontented allusion to those writers of my own country who have treated the same topics with so much *éclat*. No; I do not regret the noise which the two books "La Justice" and "L'Amour" have made in the literary world, since these works have been more useful than could have been any thoughts proceeding from a woman's pen, (*qui aurait eu le tort de naitre d'une femme.*) I would even add that the excessive severity of one of the two authors has not much alarmed me, any more than the extreme indulgence of the other.

"Many readers, male and female, have been angry at the too rough language of the brilliant logician, who, adoring only one divine attribute, justice, finds it just that the weakest by nature should be inferior, and almost enslaved before the law. Others have cried out against the excessive compassion with which a good genius wishes to inspire the lord and master towards his melancholy but inevitable female companion.

"It is, however, necessary to recognise the good produced by the labors of our two celebrated authors, (Proudhon and Michelet,) in order that we may not appear partial when we add that it is not of a lasting nature. They have destroyed the joking spirit, and cast aside the sing-song into which writers on womanhood invariably fell before their time; they have given that seriousness to the subject which I noticed before as a happy novelty. So far as the future is concerned, they have worked less nobly in its interests by vulgarising a great principle under the form of a half truth.

"To deduce from the physical weakness of the woman that she is intellectually inferior, and almost morally irresponsible, is to twist entirely the analogies which exist between body and soul. For the law of harmony, which might be made to serve so high a purpose in directing educational reforms, is logically abused when we attempt to deny that virtuous energy of character may be combined with limited intellectual power, or that a noble soul may dwell in a feeble body. At all events, this is a very bad doctrine to hold up before a generation weak in physical health, and much more given to self-indulgence than to heroic exaltation. There is not, therefore, in our present condition, any advantage in prolonging philosophical discussions which can neither stimulate social progress, nor arouse and nourish that of the individual. Let us abandon scientific and poetical theories about woman, the family, etc.; and let us preach respect for individual effort. This is what we ought urgently to demand from those of our literary men who possess the power of influencing public opinion on this question. Let individuality be respected among us, and womanhood and the family will regain, the one its forfeited dignity, the other the unity it has lost.

"I have said thus much upon the social progress shown in the condition of women in England, in order that the example which

I am about to give of the individual development which a few among us can attain, may be better understood. The truth is that in England feminine activity is respected, but not favored; that it is infinitely more difficult for a woman, than for a man, to make the same amount of talent available; but that if against wind and tide a woman of ability does succeed in creating a career, she acquires more *éclat*, and, above all, more social respect and consideration, in English society than in our own."

These remarks, I am allowed to state, are from the pen of Madame de Charnassier. Her translation of Miss Blackwell's memoir has made a vivid sensation in Paris among all who are interested in woman's work. It has even been reprinted in "La Semaine Religieuse," a little periodical sold for a few *sous* in the Catholic churches. It is for us to work earnestly, in order that the perhaps too favorable view which she takes of the comparative facilities accorded to women in England shall become only a statement of the truth!

B. R. P.

XXIX.—NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Englishwoman in Italy. Impressions of Life in the Roman States and Sardinia, during a Ten Years' Residence. By Mrs. G. Gretton. Hurst and Blackett, Great Marlborough Street.

THOSE who at the words "an Englishwoman in Italy," see the vision rise before them, which the epithet conjured up for us, will, as we did, feel agreeably disappointed with the above lively and amusing volumes. Probably the crowds of quiet and well-bred travelling Englishwomen whom it has been our good fortune to encounter, have just from those very characteristics, either settled down in our recollection as pleasant passing acquaintances or faded away into the mists of past scenes; but none of them can lay claim to that special title which is held as exclusive property by a certain obnoxious female, generally a spinster, who is trudging post-haste down the sunny side of the street with her Murray under her arm and her opera glass in her hand, and whom it needs none of the native shrugs and smiles to point out to us as "Anglaise." The very cut and color of her dress, the pitch of her voice, the mixture of dictatorial patronage and cool impertinence in her manner, have already made our hearts sink with the humiliating conviction that here was another compatriot, who had come all the way from her suburban seclusion, ostensibly to "do" Italy, and really to disgrace us, and, shall we confess it, tempt us into the mean subterfuge of suggesting to ourselves and to others, "probably an American."

Oh, yes: we can see her now, either being gulled and cheated

into so-called bargains, or—for the two extremes generally go together—haggling over the payment of a few miserable hard earned coins; priding herself on her utter want of sympathy with the feelings and ideas of the fellow-creatures among whom she dwells; despising their institutions, yet profoundly ignorant of those of her own country; hurrying through galleries as if merely to check off the accuracy of her catalogue, and only pausing rather longer in churches in order to sneer at and interrupt the devotion of the "ignorant and benighted papist" who evades her stare and closes his ears to her loud whisper and laugh, astonished at nothing from an "Anglaise." She has started with certain preconceived ideas, and travels merely to seek confirmation of them. We are thankful not to know where she lives in England, but we do know the sort of book she writes when she comes back, with facts misquoted from guide books, and sentiment diluted from Corinne, recording circumstances which have been known to every educated English reader, since Matthew and Eustace went over after the peace; and missing the truth and color of the wonderful word-painting which makes us read and re-read the descriptions of what we know so well when they are given by Hawthorne, by Andersen, or by Hilliard.

But if we dwell on this odious reminiscence of "the Englishwoman in Italy," it is but to prepare the readers of Mrs. Gretton's book for a very pleasant contrast, and also partly to excuse ourselves if we are somewhat morbidly alive to any blemishes in it, not in themselves so very great, but objectionable just from their having some remote affinity or cousinship to the ways of acting and thinking of the above-mentioned obnoxious individual.

Thus we had rather she had not confided to us even the very business-like proposal of marriage which the young Italian is reported to have made her; we had rather she had profited by the well deserved rebuke of the poor peasant, who, after patiently answering many of her questions, finally stopped her by "Pardon me, there are subjects which can only be divulged between our conscience and our God." She, however, relates the conversation with a naïve conviction that either his poverty or his faith excused any want of delicacy in the gratification of her curiosity. If this was her style of conversation, it is not wonderful if she found Italians "opposed to any reference to sacred things."

There are many mistakes of detail, especially in the portion relating to Piedmont, but perhaps not of sufficient importance to deserve notice, were it not for an assumption of extreme exactitude, and were it not, too, that they invariably occur so as to give a more amusing color to a description, or stronger weight to a particular view. This Journal is not likely to uphold the ultra views of the retrograde party, but we can safely affirm that the poor *codini* are dressed up for the occasion, and that if they did converse with the authoress, their views and opinions were by no means supported

by the absurd and ridiculous arguments she puts into their mouths. It is as like reality as Pantaloon in a pantomime is like a foolish old gentleman, or as a popular representation of a Tory squire at the Victoria would be like the reality. Living persons are spoken of with somewhat questionable taste and very much with the same effort at "scenic effect;" and ladies are made to exclaim, "*Per Bacco!*"

We conclude, and hope, that the stories related of families at Ancona are entirely fictitious. Rather unwarrantable as such an invention would be in a book which professes to be real, it would be better than the supposition of so outrageous a breach of confidence as would be implied were the incidents true, however disguised by names and dates, (and in the small societies of Italian towns the thickest veil is of necessity transparent.)

There is a tone of flippancy throughout the volumes, but we are very ready to excuse it in consideration of the authoress's lively manner of writing; except in some few instances, where it deserves a more serious name, and shows a more radical, and, we are half afraid, a national defect, to which our travelled countrymen and women are only too prone. Very fair in certain admissions which many English would hardly choose to make, Mrs. Gretton yet shocks us occasionally by a sweeping judgment of her neighbour's motives and feelings, which is not one whit more charitable because in most cases it is levelled at numbers, and not one whit more justifiable because it is about foreigners. Thus, she assumes that even the ultra religious party dislike to think of or to allude to any "preparation for eternity."

A sweeping denunciation this! and singularly untrue, as Mrs. Gretton would have found, had she been admitted into an intimacy which, with such opposing views in politics and religion, would be, as any one acquainted with the "set" in question knows, simply impossible. A strong and consistent reserve, combined with great openness and confidence, being one of the Italian characteristics which often baffles an Englishman.

After using the words intelligence and honesty, our authoress adds, "It is no want of charity (?) to say that no member of the anti-liberal party unites both these qualities." But we venture to differ both as to the fact and the charity of its assertion.

She describes one of the numerous confraternities, consisting of laymen of all ranks, who devote a portion of their spare time to offices of charity, visiting and assisting prisoners, the sick, and others. Who the members are is in general kept secret, but Mrs. Gretton assumes that if their hoods fell off they would be only old men,—a strange mistake to any one who has had an opportunity of knowing the reverse. She asserts a universal prevalence of unbelief, (and this, as we have said before, with a knowledge of necessity very limited and imperfect,) but though she records outward attention to religion, and even the unwearied performance, as

in the case of the confraternities, of practical works of charity, she dismisses such things as a "paradox," and in many cases informs us of imperfect motives, and often of what is the real state of the heart of an apparently zealous worker or devout worshipper. Verily the recording Angel could not show a more intimate knowledge of the inward workings of souls, and we trust he shows infinitely more mercy in his judgment!

But to leave fault-finding and turn to the pleasanter task of praising, there is graphic writing in the book before us, and a knowledge of the ways and habits of Italian life, which is conveyed in a light and readable form. As we have complained of "rash judgment," it is but fair to quote the candid and honorable testimony to some admirable traits in Italian society, too little known among us.

"The attachment mutually subsisting between masters and servants in the old families of the Italian nobility, is one of the most amiable features of the national character. Almost every family we knew had at least one or two of these faithful old domestics in their employment, who, when no longer capable of even the moderate exertion demanded of them, were either retained as supernumeraries, or dismissed to their native villages with a pension sufficient to support them during the remainder of their days. It is very rare to hear of a servant being sent away; their slatternly and inefficient manner of discharging the duties allotted to them being overlooked, if compensated by honesty and attachment. A much larger number of servants are kept than the style of living would seem to require, or the amount of fortune in general to authorise; but it appears to be a point of dignity to have a numerous household, a remnant of the feeling of olden times, when the standing of the family was estimated by the number of its retainers. Many more men than women are employed; and to this it is owing that the former discharge duties we are brought up to consider exclusively devolving upon females. Besides the culinary department, which is invariably filled by them, they sweep the rooms, make the beds, and are very efficient as sick-nurses. We knew a lady whose man-servant sat up for eighty nights to tend her during a dangerous illness.

"* * * It is hardly necessary to say that the low scale of wages and living here mentioned, is not applicable to English or other foreign families, it was always understood that *forestieri* paid more than natives; and yet with these advantages the servants seemed to think they were scarcely compensated for the absence of the freedom of intercourse which they had enjoyed under their former masters. We were considered proud because we discouraged the system of gossiping carried on among the natives, who allowed their servants to mingle a remark in the conversation while they were waiting at table, or to relate anything of the news of the town they might have heard.

"The contrast presented by our English reserve must indeed have been striking; and it was difficult at first for our attendants to reconcile themselves to it, or to be persuaded it did not really arise from harshness or displeasure. I have often thought we might with advantage copy a little in this respect from our continental neighbours, and by treating our servants less like machines, cultivate the kindly feeling which should subsist between them and their employers; although I am very far from admiring the familiarity here described, which arises from the inherent love of talking, and horror of solitude or silence common to all Italians."

And from some better motive too let us hope. After relating an instance of an acquaintance's impertinent curiosity;—

"* * * Yet it is wonderful to notice that the servants thus talked to, and let into the prying weakness of their masters' dispositions, are never impertinent, nor outstep the boundary of the most obsequious respect and humility. Strange indescribable people! I lay down my pen and laugh as recollections without number of similar instances rise up before me; and yet the moment afterwards, when I think of all the examples of their kindness of heart and good feeling which I could almost as easily recall, I despair of doing justice to them, or of conveying any idea of the never-ceasing contrast between the pathetic and grotesque that the Italian character presents. In all scenes of distress or affliction, their sympathy and charity are very remarkable; and it is beautiful to witness their untiring solicitude towards each other in sickness. Even young men, of apparently the most frivolous dispositions, evince, under these circumstances, a tenderness and forbearance we are apt to consider the exclusive attribute of women. No Italian, when ill, is ever left alone; his friends seem to think they are bound to devote themselves to him, and divide the hours of watching according to their numbers or the nature of their avocations. The case of a young man at Bologna, related to me by one of his medical attendants, who lingered for eight months in excruciating agonies from an incurable injury to the spine, was an affecting illustration of this devotedness. He had been gay and frivolous himself, and his companions shared more or less in similar failings; but contrary to what is usually seen, after having partaken of his hours of pleasure, they did not fly from the scenes of pain his sick-room presented. They so arranged their attendance upon him, that out of eight to ten who were his most intimate friends, two at a time were always, night and day, by his bedside, ever watchful to mitigate, to the utmost of their power, the tortures under which he labored. It was said, no woman's gentleness could have surpassed the care with which they used to arrange his bed, so as to procure him some alleviation from change of posture, or the patience with which they strove to cheer the failing hope and spirits of the sufferer."

After speaking of Easter, Mrs. Gretton says:—

"Dinner parties are also frequently given at this season amongst intimate friends; more formal ones sometimes on Easter Monday or Tuesday, by the principal families, to some great personage, the delegate or the bishop for instance. But throughout all, whether on a social or more ceremonious footing, the same kindly feeling, the same absence of ostentation, invariably prevail. Would that we resembled the Italians in this respect! They literally follow the Evangelical precept of asking to their banquets those by whom they cannot be bidden in return. At every dinner-party there are always to be met three or four old gentlemen, friends of the family, neither useful nor ornamental accessories, not distinguished by sprightliness, riches, or good looks. They would be classed as insufferable bores by us, and if asked at all, only grudgingly, to fill up a vacant place; but here, on the contrary, their age and infirmities constitute their title to admission; and unfailingly, whenever a *trattamento* is given—as any gathering for the purpose of making good cheer is denominated—are these old friends seen in their accustomed seats at the table, not the least tinge of patronage being mingled with the cordiality of their reception."

Our authoress goes to drink tea with a Canonico, whose mixture of kindliness, vivacity, and childish pleasure at seeing his guests eat sweetmeats, and admire the embroidery of the stoles and albs which have been worked for him, is well given:—

"'Look at that, look at that!' chuckled the Canonico rubbing his hands with glee, 'that is the lace which all the ladies of Loretto and Recenati and Macerata—yes all of them together—are envious of when I walk in the

procession of the Corpus Domini. I have been offered five hundred dollars for it by a Russian Princess, who came here on a pilgrimage; but I could not make up my mind to part with it. Look at that tracery—look at that ground, it is perfect—not a thread broken;' and he descanted on it with the zeal of a connoisseur. When he paused in his raptures—'Signor Canonica,' meekly suggested La Signora Placida, 'may I fetch the stole you have just had worked?' 'Ah, the little vain thing!' was the rejoinder; 'she is so proud of my vestment! It is a trifle though. Well, well, bring it out.' And from a long pasteboard box, duly enveloped in tissue paper, the Signora Placida drew forth a gorgeous stole, the original texture cloth of silver, but almost concealed by raised embroidery in gold. 'The Canonico has not worn this yet; it is for the great *funzione*—that is, church ceremony—of the Madonna in August,' said the niece, etc., etc. * * * "

We regret that Mrs. Gretton did not visit, or at any rate does not describe, any of the charitable institutions either at Ancona or Turin. Few of them comparatively are visited by our English tourists, and a description of them, such as she could have given, would not only have been interesting in itself, but might have tempted other travellers to inquire into the management and working of the various homes, hospitals, and refuges of Italy. The task has never been undertaken we believe, and is one which would be especially useful for these days of earnest and sometimes rash workers in a good cause. Good will, and even common sense we need not borrow, but experience we do need; and in cases of charity, even the failures, and still more the success of others, may be of almost infinite advantage in saving time, money, and life, so much of which is continually wasted, only to teach us a lesson which very often our neighbours have learned and paid for years ago.

Our Homeless Poor, and what we can do to help them. James Nisbet and Co., Berners Street.

A TRULY interesting and heart-rending book, owing its existence to the author's visit to the "Field Lane Refuge for Women." Long interested in the condition of the poor, the scenes she there witnessed of "the climax of human endurance, privation, and want," stirred the deepest sympathies of her nature and prompted to an inquiry into the causes of such scenes, the result of which is set forth in these pages. We do not envy the man or woman who can peruse them without the deepest feeling of commiseration, prompting to immediate effort in every way to assist those who are endeavoring to lighten the heavy burden of women's sufferings, to secure for them room and leave to work for something better than the starvation prices which now prevail, and to which men, with all their vaunted superiority of physical strength, could not, if they would, submit.

"We are sick to death of all this cry about the Wrongs of Women," say the comfortable, well-fed, well-clothed *habitués* of clubs,

drawing-rooms, and literary and fashionable coteries. Yes, you are sick of the *cry;* would to God you were sick of the *reality;* would that that could reach you in the midst of your luxurious haunts and pursuits, side by side with the cry raised for our oppressed and suffering sisters, by those bent upon searching them out and forcing public attention to their deep and manifold wrongs. Would to God that the cry were loud enough to drown all opposing clamour, and force men and women exempt by the accident of their social position from like suffering, to lend substantial aid to all and every attempt to help women to help themselves.

Again and again is it recorded of needlewomen, in poetry and prose, that they stitch their very lives into their work; that, from week's end to week's end, working thirteen or fourteen hours a day, they earn only four shillings and sixpence and five shillings per week, finding out of that miserable pittance their own cotton and needles; but we cannot hear too much of it:—

"One large outfitting establishment, well known in London—shame on them, be it written—pays still at the rate of 2¼d. a shirt!!

"One poor young girl in the Westminster Hospital, had, for weeks previously to entering there, been working for this house at her home, receiving 2s. 6d. *a dozen* for shirts! Can it be credited in these days? She stated, each shirt had eight button-holes, and the same deductions of cotton were made—it took 2½d. worth for the dozen shirts; and, on questioning her, she said, by hard work and late hours, she could make two a day, so that her labor brought her in 4d.—all she had to depend upon. No wonder she was a living skeleton, wasting away her remaining youth at a public hospital!

"Another, in a decline, in the same asylum, had for years been working for a slop-shop at 5s. a week, her hours from eight till eight. A third was in the employment of a person in Fleet Street, who engaged during the season ten hands. Their work consisted of ladies' fine under-clothing, requiring the neatest and best work. Her wages were 4s. 6d. a week. She worked thirteen hours a day.

"These prices, it must also be remembered, driving as they are, only last during the season, from April till August, after which they can depend upon no regular employment, and frequently cannot earn more than 2s. or 3s. a week—sometimes, they state, not that. * * *

"Let men," says our author, "try needlework for a time, force them to work twelve hours a day—to stitch, stitch, till bone and finger and nerve are distended like the thread they use. We think they would soon tire, and gladly leave the burthen and the payment of needlework to women."

Nor is it the seamstress only who is thus ill-paid:—

Flower Work.

"The most experienced hands in this trade earn 9s. a week, working twelve hours a day; but this price of labor refers only to those who have risen to the highest branch of the business.

"The best French flowers, as they are termed, made, however, in England, and sold under a lie, to deceive those who profess to wear none but French goods, fetch a high price; and, for a sprig that costs the purchaser 2s., the artist receives 6d. *a dozen!* English flowers average from 3d. to 4d. a dozen, and the common ones, made by children, 1½d. a dozen."

Candle-wick Makers.

"The manufactory of candle wicks is another employment in which children and women are engaged. A great deal of it is done by machinery, after

which the plaited cotton is wound into balls, cut into required lengths, tied up in hundreds, and then given to women to loop and sew with needle and thread. The payment they receive for this kind of labor is at the rate of 6d. a *thousand;* and to perform three thousand a day, which seems the usual self-imposed task, they work eighteen hours at least. Time here is weighed by the moment, and cannot be spared to use the scissors in cutting the thread each time. The plan adopted is, therefore, to fix a razor in a frame, and the thread is thus severed with the rapidity of machinery."

Glove Making.

"Gloves are paid 3d. a pair, the sewer finding her own silk."

Boot Binding.

"The warehouses and agents who employ women in this capacity pay for lining, binding, and making the eyelet holes in a pair of lady's kid walking-boots, 1s. a pair: lighter house boots, 6d., etc. It takes a whole day to do a pair of the former, and they find their own needles and thread. The hardness of the leather breaks a great many of the former, and is a considerable item of deduction from their gains.

"On inquiring the price of leather and material for such a pair of boots as ladies are charged 14s. for, from a woman whose husband had been a shoemaker and failed, and who now took home work to do, she stated that the entire cost of material and labor would be 7s. Out of such a profit as was left, a few pence more bestowed upon the one whose labor forms the staple virtue of the article, would be but just."

Cravat Workers.

"A half-penny a piece, 6d. a dozen."

Our space forbids further extracts. We shall return to this valuable little book on another occasion.

An Essay on Life Assurance, etc. By H. W. Porter, B.A. London: Layton.

We gladly hail any work, large or small, which is likely to increase a knowledge of the benevolent principles of life assurance, and the public may well feel indebted to those who, like Mr. Porter, endeavor to bring this beneficial system under their notice. In the small pamphlet before us the principles and benefits of life assurance are accurately defined in a clear and forcible manner. He has also explained the construction of the "tables of mortality," and the mode of investing their monies as in use among the various life assurance associations, in such a lucid, intelligible way, that few readers would peruse his little tract without obtaining a comprehensive view of the system of life assurance, and of the advantages to be procured by its practice. Unfortunately the majority of those who most need its aid are nearly ignorant of its value; for the industrial portion of our female population are in general strangely uninformed of the numerous facilities afforded to *them in particular* by life assurance, not only as a means of future provision, but as opening a field of employment (in becoming agents to life assurance companies) which can scarcely be overrated.

For not only is it highly remunerative, but it can be carried on in conjunction with other occupations, and thus add considerably to narrow resources. The life assurance companies would do well to appeal more directly to female influence than is now done; and we can but wonder that among the variety of efforts made to obtain assurances, females are so seldom appealed to, although it is practised mostly for their benefit.

XXX.—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.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

You ask me what is my impression about middle-class female education in England, whether it is really good, or whether at least improving? As is so often the case, I must answer you by a question, What do you mean by "middle-class?" And again, Have you chiefly in view the education of our large towns, or are you thinking of the country at large? My answers would be greatly qualified according to the definitions I might receive of your objects of inquiry.

In our large towns—in this mighty London especially—a very slight consideration will show that there are several marked intermediate steps between the classes educated in National, British, or Birkbeck schools, and the classes able to avail themselves of the higher education dispensed at first-class boarding-schools, or by highly-educated governesses and masters. Below these, but in rank No. 1, I should place such establishments as Queen's College, Harley-street; Hyde Park College, at Westbourne-terrace; and the Ladies' College, Bedford-square. Yet *these* are not institutions *in general* patronised by the nobility for their daughters. With some very few exceptions they are attended by young ladies of the upper *middle* class. I cannot see that on the whole, therefore, they can be taken out of the range of middle-class education, only, as I have said, I should place them in rank No. 1. You will find in them a mixture of professions and of retired merchants or tradesmen. You cannot exclude the daughter of a prosperous brewer, wine merchant, or a wholesale dealer in furniture, from a boarding-school or a college of the highest description; and surely brewers, merchants of every kind, booksellers, paper makers, printers, etc., are properly numbered among the *middle classes*.

Let us come, however, to middle class No. 2. This will probably include many of the former description; there will be the daughters of tradesmen and merchants, but also those of professional men, who have not yet reached the higher grades of their professions. There will be artists; there will be many of the literary class. These will be disposed of, some at the colleges, some at the collegiate schools, some will have daily governesses at home, some will be sent out to country boarding-schools of the *less* (not of the *least*) expensive kind.

Would you inquire whether I think the education of girls of this class is improving? I would answer, with a qualification, certainly Yes. There are things in which I feel confident of a growing improvement. I believe that a perception of past errors is leading by degrees to a more rational

estimate of life and its legitimate aims. In spite of what is said of the still too great desire for accomplishments, they are not, I believe, sought for in nearly so vain a spirit as formerly; they are hardly, in many cases, made use of, more than as really needed recreation for girls who cannot be always studying, and who require at least that amount of exercise for the eye, the hand, and the voice, which drawing, musical practice, and singing demand. I confess I should be very sorry to see such pursuits occupying less time on the whole than now, nor would I by any means have dancing discarded. The tendency of modern female education is setting towards the intellectual, and I believe that we need the ornamental sensibly attractive to keep our powers balanced; but there is a growing perception of this, and on this I rest my hopes. We are feeling our way to truth, though as yet we fail in some important points. One or two shall be specified.

First. With all that is said about the value of a thorough knowledge of our own English language, I do not find that its very beginnings are well mastered; perhaps the same might be said of commencements of every sort, especially, I think, of geography; but this matter of English is patent to every one who is concerned with girls' schools. Teachers of high repute do not linger long enough upon the elements, and there is an awful amount of building without a foundation. This appears by the mistakes in grammar and spelling which are made in compositions displaying much knowledge upon subjects lying beyond the range of ordinary school-girl teaching. It is shown, also, I am afraid, in a general bareness and formality of style; in a poor manner of reproducing a lesson, an act of mere memory and abridgment, rather than of thought; and, secondly, I think too many things are learnt in early life. In maturer years it is refreshment and rest to pass from one subject rapidly to another; and so, to some extent, it is in youth, but it may be easily exaggerated. Time must be given for drawing out reflection on what is learnt. *Merely* to acquire is too apt to become the all in all. Now, our own language is not really mastered till the power of free and various yet correct expression is gained; and this can never be attained by mere re-production of lectures or lessons. I do not advocate, or expect, good writing before the mind is furnished with material; but there may be a considerable accumulation of material without any corresponding power of using it.

And, secondly, I doubt whether a womanly gentleness is sufficiently cultivated in our present processes of female education. Good manners are pleasant things, and I do not like to see the dues of age, of station, of superiority of many kinds, slurred over. It is an age of driving and scrambling and snatching at advantages; and living, as we all live, too fast, we find selfishness at the beginning of the eager race. And yet the desire for improvement, the love of knowledge which we now see very widely diffused, seems to me to be on the whole better toned than in past times. I doubt whether this improvement and this knowledge are pursued and acquired from the low delight in being admired, which once reigned in female hearts. However, by all means let us have the charm of occasional repose. This restless fever of work is the special snare of our time, and bids fair to make our best things disagreeable.

But I am reminded of another section of the middle classes. Let us call it No. 3. This is a peculiarly unfortunate class. It cannot aspire to the institutions of No. 2. The expense and the accompanying charges of the college weigh too heavily upon it. The national school is, of course, too low-priced, and too much under the clergyman or the committee to meet the views of the independent tradesman and others, who, if they have not much else to be proud of, at least set great store by their freedom from outward pressure. It seems to me that this is the class which should furnish our national and British school teachers. Those of a lower grade (actual recipients of the national school bounty) are, on the contrary, the class generally offering as pupil teachers or stipendiary monitors, whence they often pass into

the rank of Queen's scholars. I entirely agree with Mr. Chester, in the December number of the "English Woman's Journal," that the lot of a national schoolmistress is often far preferable to that of a second or third-rate private governess, and would gladly see my middle class No. 2 (even) competing for it. At the same time Mr. Chester is probably aware that the education demanded by the classes No. 2 and No. 3, embraces much more than is given in national schools, and while it tends to broaden the basis on which solid acquirements may be reared, certainly leaves less time for the routine teaching of the subjects on which pupil teachers are examined. Decidedly I must say I have scarcely ever met with young people trained only in private schools who would pass a pupil teachers' examination in grammar, arithmetic, or geography, (in the third year, say,) with so much credit as the young people of a like age and standing in a very good national school would. But I must be allowed to add that this deficiency would be in my own eyes amply compensated for by the enlargement of idea, the greater flexibility of mind, the original structure of character formed by intercourse with a higher sort of society. The families to which the children of private schools belong would, I think, beyond a doubt be found better able to sympathise with a teacher's pursuits, and be better fitted to give her the social intercourse she needs. At the same time, when the pupils of private schools come to compete with those of the best national schools, they are found to be inferior in promptitude, unaccustomed to rapid and stirring examination by inspectors, and also quite unused to being themselves teachers. Thus they mostly fail. It is hard upon *them*, and also, I incline to think it is a misfortune to *the schools*, thus failing to obtain teachers decidedly of a higher stamp, though less fluent and immediately effective. A young person of sixteen or seventeen, well brought up, carefully taught both English and French, and with a mind exercised in many useful directions, is yet thus treated as incompetent to compete with a girl of vulgar parentage and very limited extent of information. If Mr. Chester can point out any plan by which such young people can have a chance of success, he will oblige many, but he must remember that even if competent to obtain Queen's scholarships, these young women have a very poor prospect of admission into training schools.

To return, for a moment, to the question of general improvement in female education, it may be asked whether I consider the class No. 3 as also making progress. Unquestionably collegiate schools, grammar schools, mercantile schools, are becoming sensible of the need of doing something for girls, and within the last three or four years London and its suburbs have put forth some vigorous efforts in this direction. It cannot be doubted that schools formed judiciously, and presenting such a scale of fees as will neither lower the parents in their own eyes, nor exhaust their means too quickly, (thereby inducing them to curtail the years of education,) are now much prized, and will do important service. Should they, from the causes I have mentioned, or other circumstances, fail to raise up national and British teachers, it is to be hoped that, with increased demand for educated female labor, channels of usefulness will open before the way of the pupils, or that, at all events, we shall have an improving race of wives and mothers.

I have already trespassed long, but you ask me about the much-vexed governess question. I do not think some of those who have lately written upon it have treated governesses fairly. By dwelling on the worst aspect of the case, they dishearten many very excellent women, and they almost exclude the numerous cases of attached and valued governesses who remain to the close of their lives in the most intimate connection with the families in which they have lived. Some of these valued family friends have been able amply to provide for the wants of declining life, and many more would be so if common prudence had been added to their other excellences.

I am, my dear Friend, truly yours,

E.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

ON THE MEANS OF PROMOTING FEMALE EMIGRATION.

MADAM,

Recurring to E. F.'s letter in the January number, I venture to offer a few remarks and a suggestion. What I have to say may apply to Australia generally, but I have New Zealand more particularly in view, since from the first being a *class* settlement, and in itself secure from the fluctuations of population, it has always afforded more facility of entrance and establishment to emigrants of the female sex.

With regard to exchange of communication, and arrangement of reception, between the colonies and the home country, there is one point sufficiently known and provided for: the demand for female domestics has never ceased, and never will until the relative proportion of the sexes among the settlers is even, for every respectable young woman having the opportunity of marriage soon leaves her original engagement. To women eligible as servants, there is next to a free passage offered: information awaits them on arrival of the choice of situations, and they are protected and properly cared for till the time of entering upon them. But this is a class of people not *superabounding* among ourselves, nor of themselves desirous to go out; and though *we* could spare them, hoping to draw others *up*, and they are to be snared by the prospect of marriage, still there are not enough, this article of exportation has to be manufactured. The colonies invite neither the ignorant nor the stained; on the contrary, the authorities press upon their agents here the necessity of caution in selecting from town-populations, and protest against any from reformatories. And this makes practicable, and promises success to the efforts to make efficient for the work required, a proud, helpless, but blameless number of the needy.

Your correspondent E. F. interests herself more particularly about a higher class. I hope to show how the interests of both might be best promoted in combination. To make it safe and respectable for a young lady, simply as such, to go out to a colony, must be a matter of *private* arrangement and introduction, not a government negotiation. Therefore that manner of entrance is limited, but every introduction widens the previous limit, and multiplies the starting points.* If pattern or precedent were wanting we could look to India, though only as to "The Way Out" is there any resemblance. Thither the beautiful and accomplished were invited to share and add to the luxuries of an enervating clime; hither came the intelligent and sound-hearted for expansion to all their faculties, where there is room and reward for labor, and the high privilege of raising new altars to God.

Young ladies, who have no introductions as *visitors*, must have a distinct calling. Governesses, who will *go up the country*, and can make themselves generally useful in whatever may be the condition or occasional emergency of the household, in the same manner that the mistress must, are so much desired by the settlers, that in specified cases the colonial government will bear part of the expenses; and any lady conscious of ability in any useful department, could learn of the London agent her chance of maintenance and the manner of proceeding. It is a lonely way, I confess. I believe it would be a safe one.

There is another class, numerous, necessitous, and suffering, to whom there is *no* way, unless, like the defrauded reapers of St. James' time, their cries have entered into the ears of the Lord of Saboath, and he is pleased to move the hearts of their sisters towards them,—the ill-paid, untaught *needle-women*, who, I am assured, would be almost in the same want, and in greater temptation if debarked in a colonial port, than at home.

* Such proceedings do to some degree already obtain, for I had the pleasure of hearing by the last mail that a friend, a gentleman, upon a farm in the Canterbury settlement, who had serious intention of coming home to fetch a wife, had found one in a young lady who had *come out* to Christchurch only last June.

Were they what the name would imply, expert in all the applications of the needle, they might find employ, but not one could fashion a garment out of a length of cloth, or stitch at more than some portion of a whole: and as to household work, their intense poverty shuts them always out from the knowledge of common furniture or decent habits.

I see in their calamity a door opened for an honored welcome to a new community to such ladies as, having themselves a pressure from within or from without, will apply themselves to fitting these poor distressed for the same. I will not attempt to sketch my idea in detail, but rather to dwell upon the leading distinction, than in the presumption of having at first arrived at accurate practicability. The distinctiveness in this from any plan I am aware of is, that the instructors as well as the instructed shall be intending emigrants, of the rank of gentlewomen; and, beginning their duties the necessary time before leaving port, shall carry them on, only modified by circumstances, through the voyage, and until sanctioned dispersion in the colony. For this scheme (as for any other) an establishment here and there is necessary; on this side the most important. Suppose one capable of containing *thirty persons* in the proportion of twenty-four of the poorest, and six lady superiors and teachers. The twenty-four could not all at once be learning cooking and housemaid's work. We know that two pairs of hands directed by a competent head in each department, could do all the work created by such a household, and anything fictitious is mischievous. Twenty should, therefore, be engaged at remunerative employment upon articles saleable in the colony. All must take turns at household work, and schooling must have daily attention from all.

Of the six ladies, two must be qualified as housekeepers, to teach and superintend the cooks and housemaids, two the schooling, two the employment, say *needle*-work. To be qualified they must first set themselves to learn as professional. The lady housekeeper must go through a course in the cooking class if she has not been in *bonâ fide* practice at home: she can see, or may have seen, enough there of housemaid's ways: the lady schoolmistress must learn from a national or a normal school the art of commanding attention and imparting to several at once. From some private outfitter hints for cutting out and apportioning might be obtained, and ladies generally have notions and knowledge of their own about ladies' and children's clothing, which would find ready sale in the colony. Though the whole establishment should go successively, there might be convenience in a portion of each rank and class remaining, and the fillings-up need not be simultaneous. In whatever order or number they entered the colony, *such* ladies would be welcomed for their own and for their work's sake, which would commend them to the resident families.

This truly woman's work would be arduous, but rewarding even in its exercise, much more in its object and end. The household would be not unlike those of olden time, when people were few in this hemisphere, and teaching was not by insulated professors, but by the seniors and superiors of noble and private houses. How light the extent of the task I propose, to what some of these undertook, may be guessed from one of Lockhart's beautiful translations, and I recall "The Lady Alder," to mark the order of rank compatible with surveillance and good fellowship.

> "In her bower sits the lady who shall be Sir Roland's bride,
> Three hundred damsels with her, her bidding to abide;
> All clothed in the same fashion, both the mantle and the shoon,
> All eating at one table, within her hall, at noon;
> All, save the Lady Alder, she is lady of them all,—
> She keeps her place upon the dais, and they serve her in her hall;
> The thread of gold a hundred spin, the lawn a hundred weave,
> And a hundred ply sweet melody, in Alder's bower at eve."

A. E.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

MADAM,

I beg to inquire if it comes within the scope of your society to give information on the subject of the sewing machines? I am one of those old-fashioned people who really love needlework; I can see "beauty" in the sewing, stitching, and button holes of a well made shirt, and think my little girls improve in mental accuracy and precision, whilst learning to count the threads of their samplers, or darn their stockings so neatly that their mending may instantly be recognised as a "lady's work." But it is impossible to ignore and look without interest on machinery which will so greatly add to the comforts of our home, although it will still leave much for us to do. Our home-made bread requires our practical knowledge of the quantity of flour required for our households, we must ourselves be able to test its quality, often to give a hint and sometimes to take the entire instruction of our hand-maidens in its manufacture, although it is no longer ground daily between the mill-stones in our own homes. I have seen and purchased "many machine made" articles of women's clothing, but where the machine has not acted, and a machine will not do every part of a garment, there is great want of neatness and finish; indeed as yet, although trimmed with plenty of coarse showy needlework, it is not as a whole better than "slop-work." Yet I am quite sure it might in skilful hands be made a great help to the mental advancement of women in every town: assisting them and yet not depriving them of their legitimate employments. Is it not a "business" which many ladies might undertake? It would require no very large capital, repairs would be needful, and as our manufacturers say that machinery will not last more than seven years, money should be laid by during that time to replace it. I have only seen *one* at work, a small one used by a shoemaker, the working of which did not seem to require much bodily strength; but if it required strength, a servant under the superintendence of a mistress might soon be taught to do it. I should be very glad to see one at work in this town, where we could send our cut-out work and have the seams and hemming done at a moderate charge. Knowing how impossible it is in this country to gain a living by needlework, I never put it out to people who profess to make a living by it; though I am often glad to supply ladies living in a leisure home, with occupation which gratifies them by the feeling that the money thus gained is their own earning. I have, however, much more needlework planned, and could devise still more, which must remain undone until the machine comes to help us. Can you give us an account in the "English Woman's Journal" of the different kinds and prices of the machines, what work they will do, and if there be any place in London, or elsewhere, where instruction in the management of them can be given.

I am, dear Madam, yours truly,

E. N.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

MADAM,

I have read with interest two letters recently published in your chapter for Open Council on the subject of servants' wages. There is a third point of the subject to which I should like to call attention; it has always been a puzzle to me:—the extreme reluctance servants show to *saving*. Though I have succeeded in persuading several to deposit in a savings' bank, it has never been done without great importunity and after repeated refusals.

May I mention another "servant difficulty?" I fear we are not going to work in a right way with our "servants' institutions." Why have we no "maids-of-all-work," general servants, as it is the fashion to call them? Having occasion a few months ago to hire one for a small family, I applied

at an institution. I waited half an hour, when the matron came, saying, "I could not come sooner, as a young girl has just arrived from the country, and I had to make arrangements for her position in the house." I did not grumble, though my time was as precious as the girl's, but stated my want. "Had she one to take the place?" "No, madam, we like our young people to go out under another servant, or as nurse-maids, etc." "Had she one willing to try?" "No, madam, ours are too young, and I *would never advise a lady* to keep house with one servant. She should have one experienced one, and a younger one under her." I said I would not occupy her time any longer, and am afraid I was not sufficiently grateful for her ADVICE. I feel certain that to be the only servant in a respectable family is most advantageous to a young woman, in giving her a knowledge of the duties of a woman in her rank of life, either as a servant or a wife; and the more intimate intercourse with her mistress consequent on their relative positions elevates and influences her character greatly.

She is also much more an object of consideration than if she had a companion in the kitchen. Finally, can you recommend me to any institution for training maids-of-all-work.

Your sincere friend and fellow-worker,

L. S. G.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

MADAM,

Happening the other day to take up a little book entitled "The Pearl of Days," by a laborer's daughter, and glancing at the introduction, it struck me that the circumstances of its publication were so curious and illustrative of the unduly low estimation in which women are held, that a short account of them could scarcely fail to interest your readers.

In 1847, a benevolent layman offered three prizes to men of the laboring classes of twenty-five, fifteen, and ten pounds respectively, for the three best essays "On the advantages conferred on man by the Sabbath day." Nine hundred and fifty compositions were sent in; among them was one by a woman, accompanied by a letter of which I give a part.

"Sir,—I have thought it unnecessary to inquire whether a female might be permitted to enter among the competitors for the prizes offered in your advertisement. The subject of the essay is of equal interest to woman as to man, and this being the case, I have looked upon your restriction as merely confining this effort to the working classes.

"This is the first effort of the kind I ever made, and I may say I am one of those who never had the advantage of attending school in early days; except for two years; or rather for one, for it was but for two years that one of my sisters and myself attended school alternately, one of us remaining at home one week, to assist mother in household labor, or in attending to the younger children, and going to school next week while the other stayed at home. Since that time I have been constantly occupied in household labor, either in my father's house, or as a servant in other families."

"The Essay," to use the words in the introduction, "was found to be correspondent in tone with the letter. It is indeed a composition of no ordinary kind, whether we regard the source from which it came, the instructive matter it contains, or the manner in which the materials are worked up in the composition, and the diction in which they are expressed. The adjudicators, although in faithfulness to the other competitors constrained to lay it aside as the work of a female, yet felt at the same time that it was a production that ought not to be withheld from the world. It was therefore proposed to her to allow of its publication independently of the forthcoming prize essays when adjudged."

There are two circumstances here deserving of notice: first, that out of so many essays by persons of the working classes, the best should be by a woman; and secondly, that this fact was a complete bar to her obtaining the prize; and this not out of any intentional injustice, but simply because it never occurred to the proposer of the prizes that a woman could by possibility be a successful competitor, and he therefore so framed his advertisement as to exclude her, a circumstance which he appears afterwards to have regretted. May not the same thing happen in other cases? May it not often occur that women are excluded by their supposed incapacity from becoming competitors for rich prizes in life, which they would have won had they only been permitted to enter for the race?

As an example of the practical good sense shown in this essay, I give the following short extract. "It might easily be shown, that among the numerous advantages which the weekly rest affords the working man is this,—namely, that it gives him its rest, without diminishing in any degree his means of subsistence and comfort.

"By preventing the seventh day from being brought into the labor market, it enables him to procure a remuneration for six days' labor, equal to that which, were there no such day, he would be able to procure for seven."

Yours faithfully,

J. B.

To the Editor of the English Woman's Journal.

MADAM,

Several letters have appeared in your admirable Journal, asking for information relative to Female Emigration. You would render the public much service if you would publish a statement of the organisation already existing for this purpose. The government commissioners grant free passages only to carefully selected candidates; and those for whom the advantages of a new country are most needed are rigidly excluded. No girls under eighteen or women whose character is gone can be taken. It is perfectly just that the colonies in granting funds should stipulate for people who will not become burdensome or injurious; but the mother-country ought to have some means of locating in more favorable scenes those to whom our large towns offer such terrible temptations. No notice of Mrs. Chisholm has appeared in the newspapers for some time. If some one would (as she did) undertake to provide homes for girls sent out to New Zealand or Australia, I do not doubt that funds could be raised for the passage.

I am, Madam, yours respectfully,

E. N.

April 6th.

XXXI.—PASSING EVENTS.

KING over ten millions of people, it may be a small thing to Victor Emmanuel, in the hour of his triumph, that Savoy and Nice should fall into the hands of Louis Napoleon as the stipulated price of the heroic show of fighting for an idea, and the unheroic reality of supporting Sardinia—for a consideration. But the day of reckoning has not yet arrived, and "the sacrifice dearest to his heart" (the sacrifice, we conclude, of his daughter, the unfortunate Princess Clotilde) to which Victor Emmanuel alluded in his address to the Chambers, may not, after all, turn out more utterly bare of reults than the "sacrifice" which hands over the unwilling populations

of Savoy and Nice to the lawless rapacity of Louis Napoleon. A strange spectacle it is to see all Europe held in check by a robber chieftain, who owes his very elevation to treachery and bloodshed, and whose whole career is a course of duplicity and crime unparalleled in the pages of history.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all."

We hope next to see the robber's hand extended in the direction of the Rhine. Europe, like many an individual, looks calmly on while the weak and helpless only are attacked; let the strong be threatened, and the strong will rally round the strong, and the days of Louis Napoleon will be numbered.

The appointment of General Lamoriciere to the command of the Papal troops has been followed by an active organisation of all the brigands in the Papal territory, while large numbers of Germans are every day shipped off from Trieste to Ancona, to serve as the Pope's soldiers. Bourbonist as Lamoriciere is well known to be, this appointment makes him, as a contemporary well observes, "not only the head of an Italian army, but of a political camp also."

The state of Naples and Sicily goes on from bad to worse; the insurrection in the latter place, if quelled, as the Government organs represent, is quelled only for the time being, and is but the beginning of an end, which no human prescience can foreshadow.

Among the topics of the month more especially affecting the interests advocated by this Journal, is the passing of a Bill by the New York Legislature, with respect to the property and earnings of married women, and their right over their children; a Bill well worth the attention of our readers: —

"Section 1. The property, both real and personal, which any married woman now owns, as her sole and separate property, that which comes to her by descent, devise, bequest, gift, or grant; that which she acquires by her trade, business, labor, or services, carried on or performed on her sole or separate account; that which a woman married in this State owns at the time of her marriage, and the rents, issues, and proceeds of all such property, shall, notwithstanding her marriage, be and remain her sole and separate property, aud may be used, collected, and invested by her in her own name, and shall not be subject to the interference or control of her husband, or liable for his debts, except such debts as may have been contracted for the support of herself or her children, by her as his agent.

"Sect. 2. A married woman may bargain, sell, assign, and transfer her separate personal property, and carry on any trade or business, and perform any labor or services on her sole and separate account, and the earnings of any married woman from her trade, business, labor, or services, shall be her sole and separate property, and may be used or invested by her in her own name.

"Sect. 3. Any married woman possessed of real estate as her separate property may bargain, sell and convey such property, and enter into any contract in reference to the same, but no such conveyance or contract shall be valid without the assent in writing of her husband, except as hereinafter provided.

"Sect. 4. In case any married woman possessed of separate real property, as aforesaid, may desire to sell or convey the same, or to make any contract in relation thereto, and shall be unable to procure the assent of her husband, as in the preceding section provided, in consequence of his refusal, absence, insanity, or other disability, such married woman may apply to the County Court in the county where she shall at the time reside, for leave to make such sale, conveyance, or contract, without the assent of her husband.

"Sect. 5. Such application may be made by petition, verified by her, and setting forth the grounds of such application. If the husband be a resident

of the county, and not under disability, from insanity or other cause, a copy of said petition shall be served upon him, with a notice of the time when the same will be presented to the said court, at least ten days before such application. In all other cases the county court, to which such application shall be made, shall, in its discretion, determine whether any notice shall be given, and, if any, the mode and manner of giving it.

"Sect. 6. If it shall satisfactorily appear to such court, upon such application, that the husband of such applicant has wilfully abandoned his said wife, and lives separate and apart from her, or that he is insane, or imprisoned as a convict in any state prison, or that he is an habitual drunkard, or that he is in any way disabled from making a contract, or that he refuses to give his consent, without good cause therefore, then such court shall cause an order to be entered upon its records, authorising such married woman to sell and convey her real estate, or contract in regard thereto, without the assent of her husband, with the same effect as though such conveyance or contract had been made with his assent.

"Sect. 7. Any married woman may, while married, sue and be sued in all matters having relation to her property, which may be her sole and separate property, or which may hereafter come to her by descent, devise, bequest, or the gift of any person except her husband, in the same manner as if she were sole. And any married woman may bring and maintain an action in her own name for damages against any person or body corporate for any injury to her person or character, the same as if she were sole; and the money received upon the settlement of any such action, or recovered upon a judgment, shall be her sole and separate property.

"Sect. 8. No bargain or contract made by any married woman in respect to her sole and separate property, or any property which may hereafter come to her by descent, devise, bequest, or gift of any person except her husband, and no bargain or contract entered into by any married woman in or about the carrying on of any trade or business, under the statutes of this State, shall be binding upon her husband, or render him or his property in any way liable therefore.

"Sect. 9. Every married woman is hereby constituted and declared to be the joint guardian of her children, with her husband, with equal powers, rights, and duties in regard to them, with the husband.

"Sect. 10. At the decease of husband or wife, leaving no minor child or children, the survivor shall hold, possess, and enjoy a life-estate in one-third of all the real estate of which the husband or wife died seized.

"Sect. 11. At the decease of the husband or wife, intestate, leaving minor child or children, the survivor shall hold, possess, and enjoy all the real estate of which the husband or wife died seized, and all the rents, issues and profits thereof during the minority of the youngest child, and one-third thereof during his or her natural life."

Two Swedish ladies, one a teacher, Miss Henrietta Oertengren, the other a singer, Miss Sara Magnus, have received travelling stipends from the King of Sweden, in order to prosecute their studies abroad. The first-named of these ladies is especially to acquire information in the different countries of Europe as to the best methods of female instruction.

The Royal Academy, too, we are glad to see, voted the sum of £50 in aid of the Female School of Art in Gower Street. Government has just withdrawn its grant from this school, which is now struggling to render itself self-supporting, and it, therefore, stands in need of the co-operation of all who sympathise in the good work it has in hand.