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EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
OF WOMEN.

BY

JOSEPHINE E. BUTLER.



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1868.

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THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

THE economical position of women is one of those subjects on which there exists a "conspiracy of silence." While most people, perhaps, imagine that nearly all women marry and are supported by their husbands, those who know better how women live, or die, have rarely anything to say on the subject. Such social problems as this are certainly painful ; they may or may not be insoluble ; they must not be ignored.

The phrase "to become a governess" is sometimes used as if it were a satisfactory outlet for any unsupported woman above the rank of housemaid. When we see advertisements in the newspapers, offering "a comfortable home," with no salary, as a sufficient reward for accomplishments of the most varied character, we sometimes wonder at the audacity of employers ; but when we learn that such an advertisement, offering the situation of nursery governess, *unpaid*, was answered by *three hundred women*, our surprise has in it something of despair.

The truth is, that the facts of society have changed more rapidly than its conventions. Formerly muscles did the business of the world, and the weak were protected by the strong ; now brains do the business of the world, and the weak are protected by law. The industrial disabilities of women, unavoidable under the earlier *régime*, have become cruel under the later. There is neither the old necessity of shelter, nor the old certainty of support.

The census of 1861 gave nearly six millions of adult English women, distributed as follows :—

Wives	3,488,952
Widows	756,717
Spinsters over 20	1,537,314
	5,782,983

The census also gives the numbers of women who work for their own subsistence, as follows :—

Wives	838,856
Widows	487,575
Spinsters (above or under 20)...	2,110,318
	3,436,749

In the first place, then, it appears that marriage, as a means of subsistence (to say nothing of the indecorum of looking forward to it in this light) is exceedingly precarious in two ways. The proportion of wives to widows and spinsters in 1861 was just about three to two, while of these wives themselves nearly one in four was occupied in other than domestic duties, either as her husband's coadjutor, as in farm-houses and shops, or, of necessity, as his substitute in cases of his desertion, or helplessness, or vice. In the second place, the number of widows and spinsters supporting themselves, which in 1851 was two millions, had increased in 1861 to more than two millions and a half. The rapidity of the increase of this class is painfully significant. Two and a half millions of Englishwomen without husbands, and working for their own subsistence! This is not an accident, it is a new order of things. Of the three and a half millions of women—wives, widows, and spinsters—engaged in other than domestic occupations, it is probable that scarcely a thousand make, without capital, and by their own exertions, one hundred pounds a year. The best paid are housekeepers in large establishments, a few finishing governesses, and professed cooks. 43,964 women are returned as outdoor agricultural labourers—a fact worthy of remembrance when it is said that women are too weak to serve in haberdashers' shops. Women, refused admission to such shops on the pretext that they are not strong enough to lift bales of goods, have been afterwards traced to the occupations of dock porters and coal-heavers. In practice the employments of women are not determined by their light-

ness, but by their low pay. One newspaper still scoffs at the desire of women to be self-supporting; but starvation is a sufficient answer to sneers. As a favourable symptom of the last few years, I may add that 1822 women are returned as employed by the Post-office. 213 women are returned as telegraph-clerks. It is instructive to note the way in which the salary of these women telegraph-clerks has fallen. When the telegraph companies were first formed, the pay of a female clerk was eight shillings a week, to be increased by a shilling yearly, until it reached fourteen shillings a week. So great, however, has been the competition of women for these situations, that the pay has been reduced to five shillings a week, a sum on which a woman can scarcely live unassisted. In France the women telegraph-clerks have met with a worse fate. The government took the management of the telegraphs, and dismissed the women, because they had no votes to bestow on the government candidates. The exclusion of women from the suffrage has been called a harmless injustice; but there is no injustice which is not liable to become an injury.

At present the principal employments open to women are teaching, domestic service, and sewing. I come to consider the remuneration of the highest profession open to women.

In 1861 there were 80,017 female teachers in England, of whom the majority were governesses in private families. It is difficult to ascertain the average salary of governesses, because the Governesses' Institutions in London and Manchester, which are the chief sources of information on the subject, refuse to register the applications of governesses who accept salaries of less than £25 a year. The number of this lowest class may be guessed from the fact that for a situation as nursery governess, with a salary of £20 a year, advertised in a newspaper, there were five hundred applicants; as I have already stated, three hundred applied for a similar place with no salary at all. To return to the higher class. The register of the last six

months at the Manchester Governesses' Institution shows an entry of—

54 governesses who asked for £30 and under, per annum.					
20	„	„	„	40	„ „
19	„	„	„	50	„ „
17	„	„	„	60	„ „
10	„	„	„	70 and upwards.	

These sums, it must be remembered, are expressions of what governesses wish to receive.* Taking nursery governesses into the account, and remembering that the above statistics refer only to the higher ranks of the profession, it is probably not too much to say that from 0 to £50 a year is the salary of nine governesses in ten. Situations offering more than £50 are the prizes of the profession, but are generally such as to compel a serious outlay on dress and personal expenditure. It is difficult to imagine how the majority of governesses manage to scramble through life, when we remember that their position involves several journeys in the year, that they must sometimes provide for themselves during holiday seasons, and that they must always dress as ladies. Miserable must be their means of providing for old age or sickness, to say nothing of claims of affection or of charity throughout life, or the means required for self-culture.†

Probably there are few portions of society in which more of silent suffering and misery is endured than among female teachers, and in the class which supplies them. Charitable people who have opened little "Homes" for decayed governesses can tell histories of struggling lives and crushed hopes

* Miss Strongitharm states in respect of the Governesses' Institution at Manchester—"Remember that those who register here are the favourable specimens of the class, the governesses who accept salaries under £20,—and their name is Legion,—being excluded by the Rules of the Institution, and that the salaries asked by no means represent, in most cases, the salaries obtained—a governess being often too glad to get a home on almost any terms."

† The condition of governesses in schools is, on the whole, better than in private families; they have more companionship and independence, and, except in the very poor schools, are better paid.

which it saddens one to hear. The reports of Bethlehem Hospital and other lunatic asylums prove that not a few poor governesses find their way thither. Some are found in Penitentiaries among the fallen. Inquiry shows that insufficient food while out of situations, added to the mental trials of an unloved and isolated being, have driven some of these governesses to opium or to strong drink, until, penniless and degraded, they have sought a refuge among penitents where there was nothing to pay. "Her funds are exhausted, and "she earnestly seeks a re-engagement;" words such as these, taken from an advertisement in the *Times*, headed—"To the "benevolent," are no unfrequent symptom of a deep and wide distress. Some determined women there are who have devoted to self-culture as much of their pittance as could be spared from the barest needs of life, and of whom it is known that, night after night when they went to bed, they have tied a band round their waist to keep down the gnawings of hunger. One such I know who has risen by her force of character to almost as high a place as it is at present possible for a *woman* to occupy in the educational world, but who is not yet free from sufferings entailed by years of mental anxiety and bodily privations. An insufficiency of the necessaries of life is not the bitterest complaint of many of these sufferers, who by their lives protest that man does not live by bread alone. "Worse "than bodily privations or pains" (I quote the words of one of them) "are these *aches and pangs of ignorance*, this un- "quenched thirst for knowledge, these unassisted and disappointed efforts to obtain it, this sight of bread enough and "to spare, but locked away from *us*, this depressing sense of "a miserable waste of powers bestowed on us by God, and "which we know we could have used for the lessening of evil "and the increase of the happiness of our fellow-creatures."

The desire for education which is widely felt by English women, and which has begun to find its expression in many

practical ways, is a desire which springs from no conceit of cleverness, from no ambition of the prizes of intellectual success, as is sometimes falsely imagined, but from the conviction that for many women to get knowledge is the only way to get bread, and still more from that instinctive craving for light which in many is stronger than the craving for bread. "Amongst the wealthier classes,"—I give the words of one who has much knowledge of that of which she speaks—"women are better provided for materially, though even here they are often left to the mercy of the chances of life, indulged and petted whilst fortune smiles, left helpless to face the storm of adverse circumstances; but here, more often than elsewhere, one meets with those sad, dreary lives, that have always seemed to me amongst the worst permitted evils of earth,—

‘A wall so blank
My shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there’—

"is true of many a life. Even sharp misfortune is sometimes a blessing in a life of this sort; something to do, and leave to do it. I do not say that any possible education, any freedom of career, any high training of faculty, would spare *all* this waste; some part of it is of that sad mystery of life which we cannot explain, and for the unveiling of which we can only wait and pray. But I am quite sure that much of it is altogether needless, and comes from the shutting up in artificial channels of those good gifts of God which were meant to flow forth freely and bless the world. If I could only tell, as I have felt it in my own life, and in the lives of other women whom I have loved, how wearily one strains the eyes for light, which often comes not at all!

"God knows it all, and if men do not know it, it is because they have been, I will not say they are, cruelly and criminally thoughtless. I wish some of those men who talk as if they imagined our life a delightful one, could but be women

“for one little year, and could feel the dreariness I speak of,
“feel too the intense longing to be up and doing, helping
“in the world’s work which is God’s work, and know the
“depressing effect of that inaptitude, which is the want, not
“of capacity or of faculty, but of training. The serious work
“of life needs all the help that women as well as men can
“bring to it, and for helpfulness something more than goodwill
“is needed. Always have my own ignorance and helplessness
“been the hindrances to that for which I would have freely
“given my life ; and I know that other women feel in just the
“same way : I have heard and known too much of thoughtful
“women not to be sure of this. Confessions of this kind,
“the simplest and frankest confessions of ignorance, and of
“why that ignorance is painful, have been made to me many a
“time by women whom the world pleases to think clever, but
“who are too true-hearted to believe the world.

“It is not as luxury that we crave knowledge, but as bread
“of life for ourselves and others. We want it that we may
“distribute it to others, with helpful hands and words of
“blessing. We want it as the lever by which we may help to
“raise the world. If we thought only of gratifying vanity,
“there are easier and shorter ways to that end. Whilst men
“are a little too apt to depreciate the intelligence of women as
“a class, they are apt to over-rate the intelligence of in-
“dividual women whom they may happen to know and esteem.
“Many a woman is credited with power merely because she
“has never been brought to the test of performance.”

For the amelioration of the condition of female teachers
two things are necessary : the first is to raise the intellectual
status of qualified teachers, and to accord a juster social re-
cognition to their profession ; the second is, to find other
occupations for those who are unfit to teach, and only take to
teaching because they can do nothing else.

The first of these objects will be materially advanced—

1st—By the establishment of places for a higher education than schools can offer, such as the projected College for women. Mr. Bryce, in his interesting "Report on Schools in Lancashire," says, "The teachers cannot be greatly blamed for this" (i.e. inefficient teaching), "since it is the result of the inadequate provision now made in this country for the instruction of women. Conceive what schoolmasters would be, if there were in England no Universities, or any foundation schools either of the higher or the lower grade, and if the private schools, by which alone education would then be supplied, were to lose the reflex influence and the stimulating rivalry of these public institutions. This is exactly what the state of the teachers of girls is now."

2ndly—By the accordance of University certificates to women, provided always that these University certificates possess intrinsic value, declare a due amount of knowledge and of capacity to teach, and are given "with scrupulous care to none but deserving persons."

Governesses would, I hope, not be the only women who would avail themselves of these privileges. Everything is good which tends to break down the line of social demarcation which still, to a great extent, separates governesses from other ladies, as once it separated school-masters from other gentlemen; and it is greatly to be desired that women with a real talent for teaching, whatever their social position, should actually teach for a few years, and raise the profession of governesses, as the profession of schoolmasters has been raised, by an infusion of disinterested zeal and the energy of a voluntary choice.

Any effort in the cause of governesses is important, not only as it affects individuals at this moment engaged in the profession, but still more in its bearing upon the future of all English girls and women, through the prospect which it holds

out of an improved education for the daughters of the middle classes, who, more and more, will have to maintain themselves. And if we think how much honour and dignity ought to attach to the office of a teacher (rightly understood) we should, from the highest motives, be anxious to raise the character and social standing of those who seek that office. For this question of woman's education is far from being one of intellectual progress merely; it is a question of deep moral import, and enters far into the heart of society, affecting the best interests of men as well as those of women. Mr. Francis Newman says, "the increased influence of women" (through education chiefly) "will keep in check the liquor traffic, and other abominations which men too readily excuse." The connection of this question of woman's education with some of the most grievous of social problems is closer than might be supposed. De Tocqueville asked an American gentleman why open immorality, such as England has to shew, was so rare in New England: the answer was, "because of the greater respect which men have for women, the women who are their equals in society." It will not be for themselves alone that enlightened and educated women will demand respect; they will claim it also for poor women, whom it is too often deemed a light matter to injure in the worst way, and even for the fallen, who through the voice of their happier sisters shall yet demand, not only compassion, but the respect due to every human being, however clouded with misery and sin.

When, on the other hand, we consider the best means of relieving the profession of Governesses by drafting its incompetent members into other occupations, the whole question of the employment of women rises before us, a painful and even a terrible problem. Three principal obstacles stand in the way of such an enlargement of woman's opportunities. These are—

- (1.) Prejudice of employers and of the public.

(2.) Combinations among workmen to exclude women from their trades.

(3.) Defective education and training of the women themselves.

I will consider these in order—

(1.) Prejudice is slowly dying out, but indifference remains. Educated men who can help, who *would* help if they knew the need, have not yet learnt that need. I do not blame them with any bitterness. There has been enough already of bitterness on the one side and of levity on the other. But an acknowledgment of past error lies at the base of every true reform. Let that be acknowledged here, which every thoughtful observer must see, that through all ages of the world's history the more powerful sex have been liable to use their power carelessly, not for protection only, but for pain. So comes it that at this day just and chivalrous men find themselves, (as Lord Palmerston said of the Emperor of Russia), "born to a heritage of wrong and oppression." They cannot, if they would, at once alter the structure of the society around them. But even of these just men I complain that they *do not see*. If they saw, they would act; and ought they not to see? Our best men too often know nothing of the lives of any women except those with whom they are immediately connected, and whom they guard in comfort and ease. They do not think of those who sit in cold and want outside. Many a tender-hearted but not large-hearted man, on hearing some hint of hardships among women outside his own circle, thanks God that *his* dear wife or daughter is exempted from them, and so dismisses the subject. When once such men are brought to see and to feel, we invariably find them *more* indignant than women themselves, who are well schooled in patience. Much of this misery is strange and unknown to men, and was certainly never designed by them. The old social order has changed, giving place to the new, but women

have fallen out of line with the onward movement, fettered by their own cowardice and the careless selfishness of men. Custom and use press heavily on women, they endure long before they dare to think whether the system under which they suffer is a right or a wrong one, whether their burdens be removable or no,—whether, in short, they have fallen into the hands of God or man. Even when they are fully persuaded that their burdens are removable, they have no voice to raise. They are unrepresented, and the interests of the unrepresented always tend to be overlooked.

(2.) The exclusion of women from trades is in most cases notoriously based upon a coarse selfishness. Take the instance of the china painters at Worcester. “It appears that both
“men and women are employed in this art, but that the women
“having excited the jealousy of the men by surpassing them
“in skilful execution, and consequently earning better wages,
“were by them forcibly deprived of the maulsticks on which it
“is necessary to rest the wrist while painting. Thus the women
“are at once rendered incapable of any fine work, and can only
“be employed in the coarser kinds of painting. The masters
“submit to this tyranny, though to their own disadvantage, being
“probably afraid of a strike or riot if they resist, and the women
“are forced to yield from the fear of personal violence from
“their less skilful but heavier-fisted rivals. This story appeared
“in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1859, and it is surprising that it
“did not excite more general indignation.” The conduct of the Apothecaries’ Company is worse than that of the china painters, inasmuch as doctors have not the excuse of indigence to justify their exclusiveness. The *Daily News*, in a recent article, concludes an account of some of the proceedings of that body with these words:—“We recommend these facts to the good
“people who think that coercion, restriction, and the tyranny of
“combination are peculiar to any one class of society. It will be
“a great day in England when the right of every individual to

“make the most of the ability which God has given him, free
“from interested interference, is recognised, and to that goal we
“are surely advancing ; but our progress is slow, and it is very
“clear that it is not only in the lower ranks of the community
“that the obstructive trades’ union spirit is energetically
“operating.”

The chivalry, or the justice of educated men could scarcely be brought to bear upon a subject where chivalry and justice are needed more. In this matter, of the bad effects of trades’ unions, much may be hoped for from the known character of working men themselves, as a class. They are not wanting in justice, in tenderness of heart, and in a shrewd perception of right and wrong when they are placed before them : but they need enlightenment and instruction,—and they wait for it,—from those who are their superiors in education and trained intelligence. Untold good might be done, and much future misery averted, if those among our leading men who have the ear and the confidence of working-men would (themselves first instructed) bring before them fairly and patiently, such subjects as these. Economics lie at the very root of practical morality, and it is to be hoped that men of influence, and genius, and experience of life, will address themselves gravely to the task of instructing the working classes on this most grave subject.

The common objection brought before the Society for promoting the Employment of Women, is that a risk would be thus incurred of decreasing the employment of men. Now, in the first place, this is by no means certain. No one proposes to interfere with the men at present working at any trade ; but while the demand for young men at high wages in the colonies continues practically unlimited, it may be questioned whether the admission to a sedentary employment at home is not a pitfall as often as an advantage. Many a young man would be healthier and happier at some manly trade in Canada

or Australia, than in standing behind an English counter or plaiting straw. To take only the trades connected with women's dress and such matters, the census of 1861 gives the following numbers of *men* employed in trades, some of which would seem as distinctly appropriate to the one sex, as soldiering and sailing to the other.

	Males.
*Mercers, Drapers, and Linen Drapers...	45,660
Hair Dressers and Wig Makers	10,652
Haberdashers and Hosiers	4,327
Straw Hat and Bonnet Makers	1,687
Washermen and Laundry Keepers	1,165
Stay and Corset Makers	884
Milliners and Dress Makers.....	803
Artificial Flower Makers	761
Berlin Wool Dealers	63
Artists in Hair—Hair Workers	42
Baby Linen Makers	13
	66,057

Disabilities of sex are parallel to disabilities of creed, and the economical results are likely to be the same. Silk weaving was driven *into* England by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and I believe that now several light trades are being driven *out of* England by the industrial proscription of women. "But supposing," says Miss Boucherett, "that the competition for employment were so great that whatever was added to the prosperity of one sex must be deducted from that of the other, is it just that the whole of the suffering thus caused should be laid upon the weaker half of humanity? How great a contrast is there between the spirit of Christianity, and the course of conduct too frequently pursued in this our country!"

"Be just before you are chivalrous," many a woman is tempted to exclaim, when she finds every door through which

* Census for England and Wales. Vol. ii. Occupation of the people: summary tables.

she might pass to a subsistence, closed in her face with expressions of deference. Signs have not been wanting which have justified the saying "that a selfish disregard of the "interests of women, and indifference to their sufferings, is the "great national sin of England,—and all national sins, if "unrepented, meet with their punishment sooner or later."

(3.) The defective training of the women themselves is the most serious of all the hindrances which I have been considering. Here it is that the vicious circle returns upon itself. These women cannot teach, because they are so ill educated, and again, they are so ill educated that they can do nothing *but* teach.* Many a woman rejected from the shop-till or housekeeper's room for ignorance and inefficiency, is compelled to offer herself among the lowest class of nursery governesses, or, failing all, to embrace the career, the avenues to which stand ever wide open, yawning like the gates of hell, when all other doors are closed.

The fault of this defective training lies mainly with the middle-class parents who, as the Endowed Schools Commissioners say plainly enough, educate their daughters to get husbands, and for nothing else.

Education was what the slave-owners most dreaded for their slaves, for they knew it to be the sure road to emancipation. It is to education that we must first look for the emancipation of women from the industrial restrictions of a bye gone age. In the meantime I may surely say that no lover of his country, of justice or of God, can see this misery unmoved. "He "looked for judgment, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry."

* "In one of Jerrold's sketches, Mr. Isaac Cheek is asked, 'What can you do?' Now, as Isaac had not dined for three days, he thought himself justified in saying—'Anything.' Hunger thus conferred the cheap diploma of omnipotence: why not of omniscience too? In a bitter moment I have been tempted to say that a governess is too often a poor lady who knows nothing, and teaches everything for nothing."—*Dr. Hodgson*.

I sometimes hear it said "I am weary of this question of "the rights, or the wrongs, of women." Undoubtedly there are many who are quickly weary of any thought which is perplexing or painful: nevertheless the facts remain the same—that women constitute one half of the human race, that whatever effects them, for good or evil, affects not one half, but the whole of the human race, and that the *primary* education of all generations of men rests in the hands of women.

There are two classes of advocates of the improvement of the education and condition of women. The one class urge everything from the domestic point of view. They argue in favour of all which is likely to make women better mothers, or better companions for men, but they seem incapable of judging of a woman as a human being by herself, and superstitiously afraid of anything which might strengthen her to stand alone, prepared, singlehanded, to serve her God and her country. When it is urged upon them that the women who do and must stand alone are counted by millions, they are perplexed, but only fall back on expressions of a fear lest a masculine race of women should be produced, if we admit any theories respecting them apart from conjugal and maternal relationships.

On the other hand, there are advocates who speak with some slight contempt of maternity, in whose advocacy there appears to me little evidence of depth of thought, or tenderness, or wisdom, and which bespeaks a dry, hard, unimaginative conception of human life. They appear to have no higher ideal for a woman than that of a *man* who has been "tripo's'ed," and is going to "get on in the world," either in the way of making money or acquiring fame. They speak of women as if it were a compliment to them, or in any way true, to say that they are like men. Now it appears to me that both these sets of advocates have failed to see something which is very true, and that their ears are deaf to some of the subtle harmonies which exist in God's creation—harmonies sometimes evolved

from discords—and which we are much hindered from hearing by the noise of the world, and by our own discordant utterances.

The first class of advocates do not know how strong Nature is, how true she is for the most part, and how deeply the maternal character is rooted in almost all women, married or unmarried: they are not, therefore, likely to see that when a better education is secured to women, when permission is granted them not only to win bread for themselves, but to use for the good of society, every gift bestowed on them by God, we may expect to find, (as certainly we shall find,) that they will become the *more* and not the *less* womanly. Every good quality, every virtue which we regard as distinctively feminine, will, under conditions of greater freedom, develop more freely, like plants brought out into the light from a cellar in which they languished, dwarfed and blanched, without sun or air. The woman is strong in almost every woman; and it may be called an infidelity against God and against the truth of nature to suppose that the removal of unjust restrictions, and room given to breathe freely, and to do her work in life without depression and without bitterness, will cause her to cast off her nature. It will always be in her nature to foster, to cherish, to take the part of the weak, to train, to guide, to have a care for individuals, to discern the small seeds of a great future, to warm and cherish those seeds into fulness of life. "I serve," will always be one of her favourite mottos, even should the utmost freedom be accorded her in the choice of vocation; for she, more readily perhaps than men do, recognises the wisdom and majesty of Him who said—"I am among you as he that serveth." In Him,—“in Christ Jesus,” says the apostle, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female.” It has been the tendency of Christianity, gradually and slowly, to break down all unfriendly barriers between races, and to extinguish slavery; and last of all it will—this is our

hope—remove disabilities imposed by the stronger portion of society upon the weaker.

What do we lose by the abandonment of national exclusiveness? Is labour demoralized because slaves are free? Does *service* cease when servitude is at an end? Common sense alone, without the help of historical knowledge, might lead us to suppose that women will not do their *special* work in the world worse, but better, when justice shall be done them.* It is in the name of *Christ* that the removal of burdens and disabilities is preached: much wisdom might be learned regarding some of these matters if people would look more closely at this, and note that this is the Person in whom all virtues which are considered essentially womanly, as well as those which are considered essentially manly, found their perfect development. A little meditation on this double truth—that in Christ all distinctions are done away, and that in Him, nevertheless, were exhibited in perfect beauty the distinctive virtues of the feminine character—would suggest some lessons which the world has been very slow to learn, would tend to remove groundless fears regarding the consequences of the abandonment of many unreasonable and unchristian theories which prevail, and to counteract the materialistic doctrine which has sunk too deep into the heart of our so-called Christian community, a doctrine which amounts to this, that “the weaker races, classes, persons must struggle on unaided, “and if they are trampled down and die out, the fact proves “that it is better for the world that they should perish, so only “a stronger and higher stock will remain;”† a doctrine of which we see the fruits in our wickednesses in Asia, &c., and

* “I have preached,” says Theodore Parker, “the equivalency of man and woman—that each in some particulars is inferior to the other, but, on the whole, mankind and womankind, though so diverse, are yet equal in their natural faculties; and have set forth the evils which come to both from her present inferior position. . . . But I have thought she will generally prefer domestic to public functions, and have found no philosophic or historic argument for thinking she she will ever incline much to the rough works of man, or take any considerable part in Republican politics.”

† F. Newman.

which takes its stand on a supposed "law of nature" that the weak must go down.

The tone in which certain foolish popular writers speak of unmarried and childless women betrays both coarseness of feeling and ignorance. They speak of these women as having altogether missed their vocation, and as necessarily dwarfed in affection and motive, because they have not performed certain physical functions. We are all mothers or foster-mothers. The few exceptions to this rule,—the cases in which the maternal feelings are weak or wanting,—are to be found among mothers of families as well as among childless women. I have known many unmarried women in whom all the best characteristics of maternity are stronger than in some who are actually mothers. It would be wise of the State to avail itself of this abundance of generous womanliness, of tender and wise motherliness which lives in the hearts of thousands of women who are free to bring their capacities to bear where they are most needed. The country counts by tens of thousands its orphan and outcast children, in workhouses, and in the streets of our great cities. These orphans have lately been called "the children of the State:" for the care of these children of the State alone, mothers and nurses of the State are needed, women who must be free to some extent from domestic ties of their own. These workhouse children are not likely to grow up to be useful to the country or other than dangerous classes, while they are left wholly to the mercy of vulgar, uneducated people.*

* I have spoken of the incompetency of a vast number of teachers, an incompetency sometimes natural, more often the effect of want of training. But I believe it is widely acknowledged that women generally have a great aptitude for teaching boys as well as girls. Mr. Bryce, in his Report, says, "The bright point in this otherwise gloomy landscape is that women are naturally skilful teachers, and that they are, as far as my observation goes, zealous and conscientious teachers. Whenever I happened to hear the teaching of a lady of good ability who had herself been thoroughly educated, its merits struck me as at least equal, and probably superior, to those which would be found in the teaching of a man of the same general capacity and education. Women seem to have more patience as teachers, more quickness in seeing whether the pupil understands, more skill in adapting their explanations to the peculiarities of the pupils'

Leon Fauchat exclaimed, when told of crimes committed in our country against children,—“*Est-il possible que ces choses soient permises par une nation qui a des entrailles !*” “Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones,” are words of most solemn import: when women begin to deserve and acquire more weight in the community, the warning contained in them will be better understood. The interests of children will not remain unrepresented any longer than women remain so. I say this with certainty, knowing the nature of woman. It will not be left to an indignant father, or philanthropist, or to an impassioned poetess, at long intervals to translate in the ears of the public the inarticulate cry of the children :

“They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free,
For the man's grief abhorrent, draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy.”

“They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their Angels in their places,
With eyes meant for Deity :

‘How long,’ they say, ‘how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's heart,
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?
Our blood splashes upwards, O our tyrants,
And your purple shows your path ;
*But the child's sob curseth deeper in the silence
Than the strong man in his wrath.’*”

The ears of my reader would not endure to hear what I could tell, what my eyes have seen, of outraged innocence, of horrors and miseries endured among the children of the poor. I am not unmindful of the benevolent enterprise there is in our country, the orphanages, schools and homes springing up everywhere. God be thanked for these ! but they do not yet meet the evil ; and we must remember that stone walls do not shut out crime, nor regulations confer blessing ; these institu-

“minds, and certainly a nicer discernment of his or her character. They are quite as clear in exposition as men are, and, when well trained, quite as capable of making their teaching philosophical. I must confess myself to have been also impressed by the interest which they so often took in their pupils, and their genuine ardour to do their best for them.”

tions themselves fail in their purpose unless the compassionate motive which originated them be sustained in a constant and abundant flow. The histories of many charities in foreign countries and at home prove that institutions devised by loving hearts for protection and blessing, have become, for lack of the constancy of the internal impulse, neither more nor less than "habitations of cruelty." What I here complain of is the thriftless waste of good feelings, of emotion,—emotion which on the one hand is ill trained, and consequently takes a false or unreal direction, and on the other is wearing itself out, unclaimed. Tears shed over sentimental works of fiction or some imaginative woe might well be bestowed on the realities around us. Surely there is room enough among *them* for the promptings of a mighty compassion! Surely there is cause enough *here* for tears! "Mine eye runneth down with rivers "of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people."

And there is other work on every side waiting to be done by women,—the work of healers, preachers, physicians, artists, organizers of labour, captains of industry, &c., while on the other hand women are waiting to be prepared for service, and ready to bridge over, as they alone can, many a gulf between class and class which now presents a grave obstacle to social and political progress.

The second kind of advocacy of the rights of women, of which I spoke, may be said to be simply a reaction against the first. It is chiefly held by a few women of superior intellect who feel keenly the disadvantages of their class, their feebleness, through want of education, against public opinion, which is taken advantage of by base people, their inability, through want of representation, to defend their weaker members, and the dwarfing of the faculties of the ablest and best among them. These women have associated little with men, or at best, know very little of their inner life, and do not therefore see as clearly as they see their own loss, the equal loss that it

is to men, and the injury it involves to their characters, to live dissociated from women : they therefore look forth from their isolation with something of an excusable envy on the freer and happier lot, which includes, they believe, a greater power to do good, and imagine that the only hope for themselves is to push into the ranks of men, to demand the same education, the same opportunities, in order that they may compete with them on their own ground. They have lost the conception of the noblest development possible for both men and women ; for assuredly that which men, for the most part, aim at, is not the noblest, and yet that is what such women appear to wish to imitate ; they have lost sight of the truth, too, that men and women were made equal indeed, but not alike, and were meant to supplement one another, and that in so doing,—each supplying force which the other lacks,—they are attracted with a far greater amount of impulse to a common centre. When St. Chrysostom preached in Constantinople, that “ men “ ought to be pure, and women courageous,” he was treated as a dangerous innovator, a perverter of the facts of nature, a changer of customs. I hope that many such innovators will arise, who will shew forth in practice the possibility of the attainment of a common standard of excellence for man and woman, not by usurpation on either hand, nor by servile imitation, but by the action of each upon each, by mutual teaching and help. The above misconception, like many other errors, results from men and women living so dissociated as they do in our country ; hence comes also all that reserve, and incapacity for understanding each other which has existed between the sexes for so many generations, those false notions about women which are entertained in society, and great injury to the work, and happiness, and dignity of man and woman alike : for it may be truly said that many of the most serious evils in England are but the bitter and various fruit of the sacreligious disjoining of that which God had joined together, the disunion of men and

women, theoretically and practically, in all the graver work of life.

The following account of the School of Art, in Newman Street, London, is interesting, as affording some illustration of this subject. Mrs. Heatherley writes, "This School was
" begun on the separate principle, about twenty-three years
" ago, by Mr. James Mathews Leigh. I first knew the place
" in 1848, when I studied as an amateur. Mr. Leigh, whilst
" agreeing to the idea of mixed classes as a theory, always
" declared that the men's conduct and conversation would
" render it impossible for any lady to come amongst them, and
" they were certainly very rough in manner when, after Mr.
" Leigh's death, we took the school. We were warned that we
" should be ruined by introducing the mixed system. Very
" soon both parties found the convenience of studying in the
" Gallery every day, instead of having to take their places on
" alternate days. Finding it succeed, at the end of 1861 we
" admitted ladies to the evening school: there are about two
" hundred students in the course of the year. Great individual freedom is allowed, and a most friendly feeling exists
" amongst the students. Every one who knew the place
" before the admission of women agrees that there has been
" great improvement; quite another tone prevails. We have
" never had to dismiss anyone for conduct that was dis-
" approved. From here went the first ladies to the Royal
" Academy, one of whom, a girl of about twenty-one, gained
" the gold medal, last December, for the best historical picture.
" As a general rule, where there are equal facilities, the women
" are the most successful. The Academy ceased to admit
" them when their numbers reached about twelve, and now
" takes them in only when the time of studentship of others
" expires. They made this change at the end of two years,
" without giving any notice here or at any other school, to the
" great disappointment of a number of girls. This I think is
" an act of hardship, as there has been shown positively that

“no incompetence exists. Unless there be chances offered to
“women of being able to follow a profession, parents will
“invest in consols, as a general rule, rather than in a superior
“education. The mention of our school may be useful,
“because there are doubts in many minds as to the expediency
“of free intercourse between young people, and facts are
“better than theories. The more that is done to bring young
“men and women together in a rational manner, the sooner
“we may hope to arrive at a social state less immoral than the
“present.”

I am persuaded that anyone who will candidly and carefully consider the histories of separate communities of men or women, for educational or other purposes, must see that the evils attendant on such a system as they represent outweigh its conveniences. The arrangement is for a given period, but not so the evils which accompany it, for they,—and of this men are not ignorant,—too often leave their effects, I may say their curse, throughout life. The objection rises at once of the difficulty of adopting any other arrangement than the present, which may be called an unnatural one. This objection will be more effectually met by facts than by reasoning, and in time facts will speak for themselves, while up to the present they attest that whenever the experiment of a different system has been tried, the difficulties have been found to be very much less than it was believed they would be, before the trial was made.

To conclude this part of my subject, although I grant that too much stress cannot be laid upon the improvement of the education of women who will be actually the mothers of a future generation, yet I wish, on the one hand, that persons who only look at it from this point of view would take more into account the valuable service our country might command if it but understood the truth about the condition and feelings of its unmarried women, and that a more generous trust were felt in the strength of woman's nature, and the probable

direction of its development when granted more expansion, while on the other hand I should like to see a truer conception of the highest possibilities for women than is implied in the attempt to imitate men, and a deeper reverence for the God of nature, whose wisdom is more manifested in variety than in uniformity. It cannot be denied that a just cause has sometimes been advocated by women in a spirit of bitterness. Energy impeded in one direction, will burst forth in another; hence the defiant and sometimes grotesque expression which the lives and acts of some few women have been of the injustice done to them by society. This will cease, and while it lasts, it ought to excite our pity rather than our anger. It must be remembered that it is but a symptom of a long endured servitude, a protest against a state of things which we hope will give place to a better. It is folly to regard it as the natural fruit of that of which we have scarcely seen the beginning. Acts of violence on the part of a long oppressed nation are not the offspring of dawning liberties, but of a doomed tyranny. Again, no important reform can be carried without a measure of attendant confusion. Evil agencies are the most vigilant for destruction at the beginning of a great and good work, and many lives have to be consumed in its inauguration. Any evils which may at first attend a social reform ought not to alarm us: they are transient; they are but the breakers on the bar which must be crossed before we launch into deep waters, but the "noise and dust of the wagon which brings the harvest home."

There is a near future and there is a far future; there are plans for the near future and plans for the far future. The world is full of plans for the near future; not so of plans for the far future. There are people who do just what comes first to their hand to do, there are others who do all for a near future, others again who do all for a far off end. The first and the last have much in common; it is the second aim,

which when exclusively pursued, misleads. Plans and schemes for the near future gain and obtain with most people; not unfrequently they wither away like untimely fruit: those who look afar off prevail, yet not they, but rather He prevails in them, who taught them to stretch their vision to the distant horizon, and enables them to bear with composure the disappointment of present hopes.

Some say, "in order to insure success for this or that movement, you must have a scheme beforehand, a well-planned system, a fixed principle of action, else you will be blown hither and thither." Without offering any opposition to such a theory, there are others to whom there appears but one principle of action,—to fix the eyes on the far future, and to do to-day the work of to-day; each day to undo the heavy burdens as they come to their hand, each day to break some link of the chains which bind, and to let some who are now oppressed go free, God guiding these efforts to the desired end.* They have more faith in that which grows from within than in that which is planned from without, and built according to the preconceived plan. Such plans or schemes as must be adopted by them are made as elastic as possible, so that the builders can avail themselves, at each step, of experience gained, and be ready to correct or undo any part of the work without sacrificing the whole; they are content with the light which falls on the path immediately at their feet, and with the fairer light in the distance. Perhaps it is by such a principle of action that we can best supply "the needs of the times," and it is the possibility of adopting such a principle in times of need that alone can ensure permanence in usefulness for the venerable institutions of the country. What such institutions generally do is to resist all movement, or if they admit any change, it is only to crystallize anew in an

* "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke; is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?"—Isaiah lviii. 6, 7.

altered form. Almost all true help is special; and crystalized institutions seldom have help to give for great and special necessities. But there are times when an impulse, having its origin in the *hearts* of men, is found to be stronger than custom and use; if it cannot work within the established bounds, or by existing machinery, it will work without them. Somehow or other difficulties vanish before such an impulse, and much is accomplished which before was held to be impossible.

I cannot conclude these remarks without expressing the gladness and gratitude with which I am filled when I see the earnest spirit in which some of the best and most thoughtful men are beginning to consider these matters; and I venture especially to acknowledge the kindness of men in high educational positions themselves, whose sympathies have lately been enlisted on behalf of the women-teachers whose struggles, and sorrows, and social disadvantages I have tried to indicate. Mr. Maurice says, very truly, "Whenever in trade or in "any department of human activity, restrictions tending to "the advantage of one class and the injury of others have "been removed, there a divine power has been at work counteracting not only the selfish calculations, but often the "apparently sagacious reasonings of their defenders." If we were not assured that there is indeed a divine power at work in all these things which some of us have so deeply at heart, we should lack the only stimulus which enables us to work on, to live and to die for that which we hold to be right and true; for "except the Lord build the house, their labour is "but vain that build it."

JOSEPHINE E. BUTLER.

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