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# WOMEN AND WORK.

BY

BARBARA LEIGH SMITH BODICHON.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

CATHARINE M. SEDGWICK.

“For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for there is neither Jew nor Greek there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”—ST. PAUL.

“Be sure, no earnest work  
Of any honest creature howbeit weak,  
Imperfect, ill adapted, fails so much  
It is not gathered as a grain of sand  
For carrying out God's end. No creature works  
So ill observe, that there he's cashiered.  
The honest earnest man must stand and work;  
The woman also; otherwise she drops  
At once below the dignity of man  
Accepting serfdom.”—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

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## INTRODUCTORY:

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Religious works and moral essays written for the English public, require some modification to meet the wants of the American people.

We are at a different stage in civilization—in a different position. We have different modes of education, different modes of life, and far different prospects. We are not consolidated by stable laws, by usage, by hereditary customs, by inexorable prejudices; in short, we are still plastic, and fusible, while, for any great change, they must pass through the process of re-casting. Therefore we have an easier work, if a wider and more solemn responsibility, than the English people.

These truths have induced me (at the earnest solicitation of a friend,) to write a short preface to the admirable Tract of Madam Bodichon, not, certainly, in the expectation of enhancing its intrinsic worth, but affectionately to ask my country-women to consider the value of her theory, and to make some suggestions as to its adaptation to our wants.

It is the Christian theory of our social organization that no class among us is condemned to perpetual labor, and none, (like the English Aristocracy) exempt from it. Labor—*work*, should, therefore, have no plebeian brand among us. Qualification for work should be the stamp of citizenship—the badge of nationality. Our women of every class have a right to this qualification. They are not to be resolved into non-entities, and to have no more effective existence in the republic than the Mahometans allow to their women in Heaven.

There is no country in the world where the mutations of fortune are more certain, and so sudden and

pervading as in this. Gold mines are discovered in newly acquired regions. Inexhaustible mines of coal are found in our sterile mountains; lead mines crop out into gold, and the enterprises of commerce, and the audacities of speculation convert the poor man of this year into the possessor of a palace or a principality of the next. From like causes spring a series of unforeseen failures and sudden disappointments.—What security is there against them? and how is this security to be attained?—Only by qualification for work for which the wants of society will afford a market.

Is there any reference to this qualification in the education of the daughters of rich parents, beyond a faint and indefinite reference to the possibility of their becoming, by some improbable and fatal reverse of fortune, *Teachers*?

And how are they qualified for this high office which implies a divine mission?—By their home education?—by the instruction they receive in the schools?—by their devotion to that instruction?—by the lives they lead in the interim between school-days and married life, or the fixed condition of single (*not*) blessedness?

Are young ladies (*ladies par excellence*), qualified in any one branch of education for professional Teachers? Do they study the science and art of music, and all its delicate attributes? Do they attempt to master the science and practice of drawing? Do they study any one foreign language as a future professor should? Do they aim to make themselves mistresses of their own language?—good mathematicians—accurate grammarians—skilful chirographers, or even (though last certainly not least,) good readers? And above all do they endeavor to perfect themselves in the calmness, gentleness, and patience essential to the vocation of a *Teacher*?

Alas! these questions are sadly answered to us by

most of the young girls whom we have seen sent to boarding-schools, with huge trunks filled with rich and richly trimmed dresses, and other drawing-room gear, into whose heads it seldom seems to enter that education consists in anything beyond exile from luxurious homes, and gliding and dodging through tiresome lessons.

We believe that the education (so called) of our farmers and mechanics is not better conducted. We *know* that it is common for them to be spared from household labor by unwisely tender mothers, and that the money spent in their *education* is devoted to obtaining a smattering of accomplishments.

Many parents will reject Madame Bodichon's exhortations to provide their daughters with a profession, or trade, with which they may meet the exigencies of life. They expect their daughters to marry and thus be provided for—the daughters themselves expect it. But it may be well for both parent and child to consider the chances against the provision. Marriage may come, and a life of pecuniary adversity, or a widowhood of penury may follow—or marriage may not come at all. As civilization (so called,) goes on multiplying wants, and converting luxuries into necessities, the number of single women fearfully increases, and is in greatest proportion where there is most refinement, whereby women are least qualified to take care of themselves. In the simple lives of our ancestors men were not deterred from marriage by the difficulty of meeting the expenses of their families. Their wives were help-meets. If they could not earn bread, they could make it. If they did not comprehend the "rights of women," they practised her duties. If they did not study political economy, and algebra, they knew the calculation by which the penny saved is the penny gained. Instead of waiting to be served by costly and wasteful Milesians, they "looked well to the ways of their household, and ate not the bread of idle-

ness." The Puritan wife did not ask her husband to be decked in French gauds, but was truly

"The gentle wife who decks his board,  
And makes his day to have no night."

In giving the reasons that restrain men from marrying at the present day, and thereby diminish the chances of this absolute provision for women, we beg not to be misunderstood. We would not restrict women to the humble offices of maternal existence. The best instructed and most thoroughly accomplished women we have ever known have best understood and practised the saving arts of domestic life.

If parents, from pride, or prejudice, or honest judgment refuse to provide their daughters with a profession, or trade, by which their independence may be secured. If they persist in throwing them on one chance—if the daughters themselves persevere in trusting to this "neck or nothing" fate, then let them be qualified in that art and craft in which their grandmothers excelled, and which is now, more than at any preceding time the necessary and bounden duty of every American wife, whatever be her condition. Never by women in any civilization was this art so needed, for never, we believe, were there such obstructions to prosperity and comfort as exist in our domestic service. And how are the young women of the luxurious classes prepared to meet them? How are the women of the middle-classes fitted to overcome them? and how are the poorer class trained to rejoice in their exemption from them?

If a parent look forward to provision by marriage for his daughter, he should at least qualify her for that condition, and be ashamed to give her to her husband unless she is able to manage her house, to educate her children, to nurse her sick, and to train her servants—the inevitable destiny of American housewives. If she can do all this well she is a productive partner,

and as Madame Bodichon says, does as much for the support of her household as her husband.

It may, or may not be the duty of a mother to educate her children in the technical sense. But if her husband is straining every nerve to support his family it would be both relief and help if she could save him the immense expense of our first rate schools, or the cost of a governess. If she be skilled in the art of nursing she may stave off the fearful bill of the physician. If she know the cost and necessary consumption of provision, the keeping of accounts, and, in short, the whole art and mystery of domestic economy, she will not only preserve her husband from an immense amount of harrassing care, but secure to him the safety, blessing and honor of living within his means.

If she be a *qualified housewife* the great burden, perplexity and misery of house-keeping from the rising to the setting sun, from our Canadian frontier to far South of Mason and Dixon's Line, will be—we will not say overcome, but most certainly greatly diminished.

Overcome it cannot be while the present imperfection of domestic service exists. It is a rough saying, but true, "We must take the bull by the horns."—We must fight the battle. We must accept God's appointment. We must, year after year, receive into our families demi-savages—foreign people, ignorant of our modes of life, grown up in habits adverse to them. We must skilfully teach, firmly discipline, and patiently bear with them. We must do this for the love of God and our neighbor—and for *self preservation*; and when this, perchance, is done, we must see them pass off into their vocation, married life, and take to our homes a new raw force! We know nothing of Southern life from observation, but we have no reason to believe that the Southern mistress of slaves has an easier task than the matron of the free North.

These, certainly, are not the light visions that float around the romantic heads of our young women when they look forward to marriage as a condition of sweet dependence, and elegant leisure. These are not the calculations of their parents when they transfer them to their husbands for support and exemption from *work*.

But these hard tasks are in the future of every American married woman. *Work* in this form is her inevitable destiny. No amount of fortune, no contrivance of tenderness can secure her from it. Is it not, then, true wisdom to fit herself for her work? Ought she not to study the domestic arts as lawyers and doctors study the sciences of law and medicine?

We do not limit our suggestions to the young women of the luxurious classes. The daughters of our farmers and mechanics are not brought up in the steps of their frugal grandmothers. Their parents strain every nerve, not to qualify them for productive labor—but to enable them to dress showily, or if they fail of marriage to half educate them for the *genteel* business of teaching.

We have limited our remarks mainly to the domestic education of expectants of marriage. We believe there are very few of our young women who are not within this class, and with them, as it seems to us, this great reform is needed. The administration of her family is the work before her. We are not among those who claim or desire the right of suffrage for women. We believe that her exemption from direct political duties is a privilege and blessing to her. But we also believe that unless she be qualified by training and study for the government of her family, we shall continue to hear from one end of our broad land to the other the continual wailing and complaining of young wives, wearied, worried and worn by cooks, nurses, and house-maids as incompetent as themselves; and continue to see husbands obstructed, teased, disap-

pointed, accepting life in a boarding-house as a refuge from homes which their young dreams had glorified with domestic happiness, found too late *not* to be the

“Bliss that has survived the fall.”

We have endeavored to show that if marriage is the destiny of our women, they should be prepared to make that destiny endurable to themselves and others. Madame Bodichon maintains that it does not exempt them from the wisdom and duty of qualifying themselves for work that will enable them to aid their husbands (if need be), or to secure their independence in the reverses and exigencies of life. She sets forth the happiness of “leaving the world a little better than we find it;” and she shows that new fields of labor are opened to women. “The harvest is plenteous, as yet few reapers have entered in.”

Mrs. Fry, Florence Nightingale, Miss Dix, and many other noble women have led the way to voluntary and beneficent work, fitted for women of education and refinement who have the great heart and sanctified courage to leave luxurious homes to “visit the sick and in prison.” They are exceptional characters, but have they not solved the problem of employment for those single women—the spoiled children of luxury and idleness—who have hitherto fretted out life in invalidism and ennui? Monastic institutions in Catholic countries have absorbed this class, and anticipated death by seclusion from the world.

We are ready to reproach the Romish religion with its errors; let us not forget the example of its self-sacrificing daughters.

The heart of the Protestant world has been stirred by the beautiful mission of Florence Nightingale. But similar work has long been quietly, patiently and efficiently done by the “Sisters of Charity,” who have visited prisons, have trained poor children, have shrunk from no climate, nor noisome den, nor raging

epidemic. And ladies of the Catholic Faith, not bound by vow, have endowed and sustained hospitals and other charitable institutions,

The whole field of charitable work is open to the hand of woman. The rich woman with her wealth, (which is one of her talents,) is bidden to it; and the large class of women who must or should work for their living—who can no longer spin or stitch, can earn salaries, and put their souls into the work—work-houses, prisons, reformatories, penitentiaries and hospitals are open to them. They should be at least as well paid as men, for they are by nature better qualified for the tasks which call for delicate perceptions, ready sympathy and patient endurance. Teaching is now almost the only employment that our young women are educated for, that comes within the range of their parents ambition for them, or their own forecast. But there are hosts of young women who have no taste for teaching, and no natural fitness for it. There are many branches of productive manufactures attainable to these, which are suited to them. They may be made perfectly competent sales-women and shop-keepers. They may be printers, watch-makers, engravers. The schools of design are open to them, and offer to them many branches of productive industry that do not in the least trench upon the delicacy of their sex. And, if endowed with genius and perseverance, they may follow in the footsteps of Angelica Kauffman, Rosa Bonheur, Harriet Hosmer, and Madame Bodichon herself, to high achievements in sculpture and painting.

We do not wish to see women lawyers, or divines, so far as officiating in public is concerned, but surely they can be the ministers, messengers and servants of Christ, in prisons, hospitals, and in all charitable institutions. The experiment of Elizabeth Blackwell and her coadjutors in New York has been so modestly prosecuted that there are many who are not aware how

completely they have demonstrated the adaptation of the healing art to women, and their superior qualifications for the administration of hospitals and dispensaries.

But we have no right to detain our readers from Madame Bodichon's Tract. We expect a wide effect from it. We hope it will give an impulse to many wise and good parents, and a direction to the efforts of their daughters. We believe there are multitudes of young women in our land too intelligent and too sensible of their responsibilities to consent to be mere drags to their husbands; or, if they have no husbands, to wear out their lives in dependence, or to live by sordid saving of their insufficient means, when they may secure their own independence and all the sweet and cheerful blessings that attend it—the power of helping others being not the least among them.

## PREFACE.

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This Tract is addressed especially to men and women who live by the work of their hands or heads; their ears are always the most open to reason; they are the main mass and the hope of our country; and it is they who are the most to blame in not training up their daughters to work.

I beg all of you who read, to think seriously over my words: if they have truth in them, it is a matter between God and your own souls that you act upon them.

This Tract forms one of a series on the same subject—the “Improvement of Women,” written by English women and American men.

*5 Blanford Square, London,  
April, 1857.*

## WOMEN AND WORK.

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### WOMEN WANT PROFESSIONS.

CRIES are heard on every hand that women are conspiring, that women are discontented, that women are idle, that women are overworked, and that women are out of their sphere. God only knows what is the sphere of any human being.

Again, we hear cries that the world is going wrong for want of women, that moral progress cannot be made without their help; that Science wants their delicate perceptions; that Moral Philosophy wants the light of their peculiar point of view; Political Economy, their directness of judgment and sympathy with the commonalty; Government, the help of their power of organizing; and Philanthropy, their delicate tact. Hospitals must have them, asserts one; Watches must be made by them, cries another; Workhouses, Prisons, Schools, Reformatories, Penitentiaries, Sanitoriums, are going to rack and ruin for want of them; Medicine needs them, the Church calls for them, the Arts and Manufactures invite them.

One great corresponding cry rises from a suffering multitude of women, saying, "We want work."

Women are God's children equally with men. In America and Great Britain this is admitted; because these are Christian countries: In Mahomedan countries this is denied. We admit it as a principle, but we do not admit all that can be deduced from it; in practice we deny what we affirm in theory. If we are God's children, we owe certain duties to him. The life of most women is a practical denial of such duties.

God sent all human beings into the world for the purpose of forwarding, to the utmost of their power,

the progress of the world. We must each leave the world a little better than we found it. Consider all the evils in the world; you will see they are such as God has given us power to cure. We could not prevent good if we set about it, but evil we can hinder; it has in it the seeds of death, while all good influences are protected by God.

We are God's tools, by which he will make the world what he intends it to become.

By working for the salvation of this world we may chance to achieve our own in another, but never by any other means. To set to work to save our own souls is as foolish as for a man on horseback to try and pull up his fallen horse, or endeavour to use a lever without a fulcrum. To do God's work in the world is the duty of all, rich and poor, of all nations, of both sexes.

No human being has a right to be idle, no human being must use the earth as a stable, and "eat off his own head." Whatever comes under our hands should be bettered by the touch of our fingers. The land we own we should drain and make more fertile for ever. The children who are in our power should be educated. If a sickness falls upon our town, we must try to stop its progress, and to alleviate the sufferings it occasions. If an old roof lets in the rain, we must new-slate it. If an old pot comes to us to mend, we must mend it as best we can. *And we must train ourselves to do our work well.* It is a good thing to ask ourselves daily the question "Have I eaten my head off to-day?" Women must, as children of God, be trained to do some work in the world. Women may not take a man as a god: they must not hold their first duty to be towards any human being.

For our part, when we think of the lives of most women, how they are centred and bound up in human affection, living no life but that of love, we cannot wonder that reason goes when love is lost. "Oh! that I had

now what you men call the consolations of philosophy," said a woman whose heart was sorely tried. The consolations of philosophy which men have, are indeed great when philosophy means the knowledge of God's works, but not enough unless some branch of the philosophy involves work. The man who works to discover the habits of an insect, or the woman who watches the growth and means of nourishment of a polype—whoever works, is consoled. I have a great respect for the young lady, who, being desperately in love, and having to give up her lover, went through the first four books of Euclid that she might not think of him. But I think it must have been heavy work, and that if she had been studying to be an architect, her purpose would have been better answered. It is surprising to see girls study so much as they do, considering how constantly the idea is put before them that they must give it up some day.

We were talking with Dr. Emily Blackwell a little while before she left England to join her sister, Dr. Elizabeth, in New York, as to the possibility of married women continuing in the exercise of professions if they had many children. She said: "Granting women want to be doctors, and that medical science has need of women, women must, and will, enter the profession. I think it most probable that women will modify the practice of medicine; they will, probably, practise in groups, taking different branches; but we can hardly tell what effect the introduction of women may have upon the medical profession. We shall see in time; depend upon it, it will be good."

Queen Victoria fulfils the very arduous duties of her calling, and manages also to be the active mother of many children. Each woman must so arrange her own life as best to fulfil all her duties. Women can be trusted to do the best for their young children; maternal love is too strong ever to be weakened by any love of a science, art, or profession. As the human being is larger and nobler, so will all the natural affections be

larger and nobler too. Let women take their places as citizens in the Commonwealth, and we shall find they will fulfil all their home duties the better.

There are now many trades open to women with good training in bookkeeping, and knowledge of some especial branch of business, not difficult to acquire, if fathers would help their daughters as they help their sons. Two or three young women together might enter upon most shop-keeping businesses. But very few young women know enough arithmetic to keep accounts correctly.

We remember seeing two young women who kept a shop in a country village, slaving to answer the perpetual *tinkle, tinkle* of the shop-bell, dealing out half-pennyworths' of goodies, bacon, or candles—who, when asked how much they were paid yearly for the hard work of attending the shop, hardly understood the question, and only knew that *generally* they did not have to pay more for their goods than they sold them for, and got their food into the bargain, week by week. "But how do you make your other expenses out?" "By letting lodgings," said they.

It is unjust to say sneeringly, "If women want to work, why don't they?" It is not an easy thing for a boy brought up to manhood to expect a large fortune, to gain his livelihood if he be suddenly deprived of every farthing he possesses; and much is the pity lavished upon him. Probably friends lend him some hundreds of pounds for him to live upon, while he prepares for some profession. The case of most women who are left destitute is much harder, and there are fewer paths open to them, and these are choke full. We are sick at heart at the cries that have been raised about distressed needle-women, and decayed gentlewomen, and broken-down governesses. Much sympathy has been felt, but little solid thought given to the subject.

There is no way of aiding governesses or needle-wo-

men but by opening more ways of gaining livelihoods for women. It is the most efficacious way of preventing prostitution. "At present the language practically held by modern society to destitute women may be resolved into Marry—Stitch—Die—or do worse."

Apprentice 10,000 to watchmakers ; train 10,000 for teachers for the young ; make 10,000 good accountants ; put 10,000 more to be nurses under deaconesses trained by Florence Nightingale ; put some thousands in the electric telegraph offices over all the country ; educate 1,000 lecturers for mechanics' institutions ; 1,000 readers to read the best books to the working people ; train up 10,000 to manage washing-machines, sewing-machines, &c. Then the distressed needle-women would vanish ; the decayed gentlewomen and broken-down governesses would no longer exist.

In the United States the want of a professional training for women is almost as much felt as in England. The greater ease in gaining a livelihood prevents the same amount of absolute suffering which we see among women in the old country.

Teachers receive much better pay, and many ladies I have met in America have told me they have been able to save enough in a few years to live upon for the rest of their lives. I know one lady who has amassed a large fortune by teaching dancing in the South ; and I have seen in the New Orleans *Picayune* \$90 a month, with board and lodging, offered to music teachers.

But all these teachers do not teach well, or teach because it is the profession they like best, they are teachers because, in America as in England, teaching is almost the only means of gaining bread, open to women. In the mint in Philadelphia, I saw 20 or 30 young ladies who received half, sometimes less than half, the wages given to men for the same work. They were working ten hours a day for a dollar (4s. English). This proportion shows the lamentable amount of competition among women, even in the United States, for any work which is open to them.

In no country have I been so much struck by the utter idleness of the lady class, except, perhaps, in the East, among the Turks and Moors. There is in America, a large class of ladies who do absolutely nothing. In every large town in the United States, there are five or six (in some places 20 or more) large Hotels or Boarding houses containing several hundred inhabitants each. This hotel population mainly consists of families who live altogether in hotels, and the ladies having no housekeeping whatever to do, have few of the usual duties of women in Europe, and are more thoroughly given up to idleness and vanity than any women, I believe, in the world. These "ladies" have not the cultivation which glosses over the lives of so many women in Europe, and does give them some solid value in society as upholders of the arts and literature, but are generally very ignorant and full of the strangest affectations and pretensions. The young ladies, especially, reminded me of certain women I have seen in Seraglios, whose whole time was taken up in dressing and painting their faces; with this difference, the ladies of the East spend their days in adorning themselves to please one lord and master—the ladies of the West to please all the lords of creation. Which is the noblest ambition?

At this present time, I believe there is in America as strong a public opinion against women working for a livelihood as in England. No father in a "respectable class" thinks of giving his daughter a professional education. If he can live in some "style" he counts on his daughters marrying, and if he cannot, he probably sends them to some relative in a city, who receives them for a long visit, with the hope of "getting them off." Many thousands of young girls come to the cities to stay with brothers, uncles, or friends for this purpose. A worse preparation for any serious life cannot be conceived. Years of idleness are often passed in this way, years spent in nothing but dressing

and dissipation—and what does it lead to? Marriage probably: but what sort of marriages can be formed by young girls looking at the world from such a false position? With such a beginning to life it is almost impossible the girl can ever become a noble human being, a good and wise woman. When she ceases to be a young girl she will be an “old girl,” and never a woman. The great privilege which every human being ought to have of perfect freedom of choice, is rendered impossible, and a happy marriage can be but a rare accident.

Unless a woman can earn her own livelihood or has a certain income, she has little chance of forming an equal union.

In America—in that noble, free, new country, it is grievous to see the old false snobbish ideas of “respectability” eating at the heart of society, making generations of women idle and corrupt, and retarding the onward progress of the great Republic.

Some reformers in England think that if women entered professions, some association of families together would probably take place, and the woman born with a natural gift for managing domestic concerns would arrange for the association, leaving the Doctor her time, and the newspaper editors free from the cares of cooking and cleaning. Here in America are these associations ready formed by other wants of the time, but exactly adapted to women who have professions. The women in these great Phalanstery-like hotels have their time to themselves, but without the education to use it. Professions for these women are necessary to save their souls from the devil, and to save their husbands, too, from that terrible treadmill, that “everlasting grind” in which American men live.

Yet America is full of hopeful signs for women; the men are not so dead set against the rights of women as in the old country.

Men of position and reliable sources of information

have assured me that when in any State in America a majority of women shall claim the suffrage, it will be granted them. There are other signs which we have not space to allude to here. The importance of giving women a means of livelihood, independent of marriage, is discussed by the press. And the necessity of greater activity among women is urged vehemently by the newspapers, who believe the health of the mothers of men, and, ergo, of men, is deteriorating in America in consequence of the extreme idleness and luxury in which the ladies live.

A great proportion of American women live indoors and do nothing; the others, again, live indoors and do too much. There are many thousands who have to do household work, bear, and nurse children, cook and wash, and live continually indoors, often in badly-built, undrained, unhealthy wooden houses, and suffer terribly. The beginning of civilization falls hard on American women. As a pendant to this, side by side, may be seen a sister, living in the midst of luxuries, which many an English lady of rank would refuse as superfluous.

There is always hope of change in America; evils do not go on for ever dragging their slow length as in England. A crying evil exists and is a scandal to the world, when suddenly the young giant rouses up and with a mighty heave shakes it off. The ideas of human liberty and justice are too widely spread in America for any state of things in direct opposition to these principles, to endure for ever. We believe Europe will never move forward on this question until America goes ahead and clears the way.

It is only fathers and mothers who have the power to effect this change. Remember the next generation is ours to form and model as we will. If all fathers and mothers were faithfully to discharge their duties to their daughters, the next generation would see women healthier, happier, and more beautiful than women have ever yet been.

WORK—not drudgery, but WORK—is the great beautifier. Activity of brain, heart, and limb, gives health and beauty, and makes women fit to be the mothers of children. A listless, idle, empty-brained, empty-hearted, ugly woman has no right to bear children.

To think a woman is more feminine because she is frivolous, ignorant, weak, and sickly, is absurd; the larger-natured a woman is, the more decidedly feminine she will be; the stronger she is, the more strongly feminine. You do not call a lioness unfeminine, though she is different in size and strength from the domestic cat, or mouse.

If men think they shall lose anything charming by not having ignorant, dependent women about them, they are quite wrong. The vivacity of women will not be injured by their serious work. None play so heartily as those who work heartily. The playfulness of women which makes them so sympathetic to children, is deep in their nature; and greater development of their whole natures will only increase this and all their natural gifts.

It is often said, it is wrong of daughters to leave their parents in order to follow this or that pursuit. Mothers and fathers say nothing, if their daughters leave them to be married. It is much more important to the welfare of the girl's soul that she be trained to work, than that she marry. It is very hard for children to battle against this feeling in mothers and fathers, even when they feel it most unreasonable. Generally, daughters have neither the courage to choose work, nor the resignation to submit with cheerfulness to be children all their days. Oh, girls, who are now suffering in this battle, remember your sufferings when you have children, and do unto them as you would you had been done unto!

Children who spend their lives in ministering to the little fancies and whims of a father or mother, who, from the old habit of childish obedience, cannot break through the slavery of home-life, should remember,

that by wasting their lives in such trivial duties they weaken their own intellects and hearts, and will as surely one day or other be dependent upon such attentions themselves. Far be it from us to say that children do not owe deeds of reverence and duty to their parents—they do, most certainly. All that ennobles women will make them discharge these more faithfully. But for two or three daughters to remain at home idle, with the pretence of attending on a father or mother who is not even always old, infirm, or ill, is absurd. The pretence breaks down as soon as a “good match” offers. There are, moreover, many professions, such as medicine, many branches of decorative art, wood-cutting, engraving, watchmaking, &c., &c., which, after some time of apprenticeship, can be carried on at home. The alteration of the laws concerning married women’s property will make a great difference in the public feeling as regards women working after marriage. The 60,000 women who have signed petitions for the alteration of the law, and which alteration will give them a right to their own earnings after marriage, have quite settled the question as to whether women want to earn money or not. Women *do* want work, and girls must be trained for professions.

#### PROFESSIONS WANT WOMEN.

Ask the thousands of soldiers who passed under the consoling hands of Florence Nightingale and her noble band, what profession wants women! The profession of nursing wants women, and will have them. I think those same soldiers, if they could vote, would elect women to fill the whole commissariat department.

Ask the emigrants who went out to Australia year after year under the careful and wise system of Caroline Chisholm’s colonization, how women can organize and what professions they should fill. I think they would answer, “As organizers of colonization, emigration, secretaries to colonies,” &c., &c.

Ask those interested in the reform of juvenile criminals. They will say, "Mary Carpenter is appointed by nature to be establisher and inspector of such schools. Women are wanted in the vast vocation of reformation."

Miss Dix is another appointment by Divine command. She has established lunatic asylums in every part of the Union, and caused between 36 and 40 Acts to be passed by Legislatures for the better care of the insane, writing the clauses herself, never trusting a word to clerks and officials.

She has visited asylums in every country in Europe, except Spain and Portugal, and has been also in the East; *always alone*, studying prisons and charitable institutions, and never met with any difficulties any brave woman might not conquer.

Miss Dix believes educated women would be of the greatest use in the care of the insane. She herself has remarkable power, and has frequently calmed raving madmen whom no one else dared approach.

There is a lunatic asylum at Ghent, in Belgium, containing 269 patients, entirely under the care of the Sisters of Charity. Rarely is restraint, or even seclusion, employed, and although 201 of the patients are considered incurable, the Sisters are perfectly competent to their task.

The heroic conduct of Mrs. Patton proves that a woman can learn to take observations, and to keep the reckoning of a ship to some purpose; the story of her noble courage is fresh in the minds of all.

We might give many more instances.

The work which women do for the press is considerable. It is difficult to know how much. I know of six journals edited by women in America; two-thirds of the writers in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal* are women; Mrs. Johnson, of Edinburgh, was for years the real editor of the *Inverness Courier*, the principal paper in the North of Scotland.

Perhaps there is no profession which so calls for women as that of medicine. In New York there are three very eminent female physicians, and a hospital established through the exertions of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, into which women are received as students.

In Boston, Dr. Harriet K. Hunt has practised for twenty years. In Philadelphia, Dr. Ann Preston is professor of physiology to the Female Medical College. But in England, Jessie Meriton White attempted in vain to obtain a medical education. She applied to fourteen London hospitals, and was refused by all. The London University, the most liberal community in England, refused to admit her as a candidate to the matriculation examination. In fact there is no way of obtaining a diploma in England.

In prisons and workhouses women are much needed. An earnest quiet woman in such places has more power than a strong man. The prisoner, the ruffian, the lunatic, feel, what Shakespear has said—"Your gentleness shall force sooner than your force move me to gentleness."

Women can be designers for art, manufacture, and, with proper training, show themselves remarkably apt at ornamentation. All that appertains to interior architecture is especially woman's province, though there is no reason at all why a woman should not build a cathedral if she has the instruction and the genius.

There is no reason why women in England and America should not make as good watches as the women of Switzerland. The watch-making men of course, are against it, and persecute all who begin; this is natural, but let some thousands of the 50,000 women of London, who are working for under six pence a day, enter this new profession, and the persecution will cease.

Of the profession of teacher, we can say what Webster said of the law—"There is always room above." For well trained teachers there is a great demand—below them is no room—nothing but starvation.

Of remarkable women teachers, Mrs. Luce is an instance. Mrs. Luce, twenty-eight years ago, came to see the necessity of giving some education to the female children of the Moors, Turks, and other Mohammedans of Algeria. The attempt was considered utterly impracticable, as the men of those races keep their women entirely immured and entirely ignorant, and all their prejudices as husbands and Mohammedans are strongly against even allowing them to leave their houses.

In spite of all difficulties—want of money, want of help, want of government countenance against the furious prejudices of the people themselves, Mrs. Luce succeeded; and I have seen above a hundred Moorish girls, from 4 to 18, assembled together in a beautiful Moorish house, busy over their slates and books as any little Europeans or Americans. No one who does not know what difficulties Mrs. Luce has had to struggle against, can at all appreciate the magnitude of the work she has accomplished.

Never since the world began have women stood face to face with God. Individual women have done so, but not women in general. They are beginning to do it now; the principle that Jesus Christ laid down is beginning to be admitted. Young women begin to ask at the age of sixteen or seventeen, "What am I created for? Of what use am I to be in the world?" According to the answer is often the destiny of the creature.

Mothers! the responsibility lies with you: what do you say in answer? I fear it is almost always something to this purport: "You must marry some day. Women were made for men. Your use is to bear children; to keep your home comfortable for your husband. In marriage is the only respectable life for woman."

If a girl has a religious or an inquiring mind, she will be much dissatisfied with this answer, and say, "But if no one ask me to marry whom I can love? or

suppose I do not want to marry? Suppose my husband dies? or, what am I to do all the years I have to wait for a husband? Is there nothing I can do for anybody?"

The newness of the world and the vigor of young life will prevent some years from being absolutely miserable. Among the rich, music, languages, drawing—"accomplishments," in fact, fill up much of life, and stop the questionings and discontent of heart. In so far as they do this they are pernicious. In so far as they are amusements only, they are killing to the soul. It is better far to hear the voice of the hungry soul loud and crying. It is better to have the bare fact of idleness than to be busy always doing nothing. Accomplishments, which are amusements only, do more harm than good. Do not misunderstand: all "accomplishments" may be works, serious studies; and may, by helping others to bear life better, and giving pleasure to those who have none, be made worthy work for women; but for this end they must be studied faithfully and with self-devotion.

Women in modern life, even in the humblest, are no longer spinsters. Their spinning is all done by the steam engine; their sewing will be soon all done by that same mighty worker. The work of our ancestresses is taken away from us; we must find fresh work. Idleness, or worse than idleness, is the state of tens of thousands of young women: in consequence, disease is rife amongst them; that one terrible disease, hysteria, in its multiform aspects, incapacitates thousands.

There is nothing in the world so sad, so pitiful to see, as a young woman, who has been handsome, full of youthful joy, animal spirits and good nature, fading at thirty or thirty-five. Becoming old too soon, getting meagre, dried up, sallow, pettish, peevish, the one possible chance of life getting very uncertain, and the mind so continually fixed on that one hope that it becomes gradually a monomania.

It is difficult for fathers and mothers when they look at their daughters young, charming, full of cheerfulness and life, to think that they can change; but, alas! probably they will in ten years change sadly. No cheerfulness that does not spring from duty and work can be lasting.

I believe more than one half the women who go into the Catholic Church join her because she gives work to her children. Happier far is a Sister of Charity or Mercy than a young lady at home without a work or a lover. We do not mean to say work will take the place of love in life; that is impossible; does it with men? But we ardently desire that women should not make *love their profession*.

Love is not the end of life. It is nothing to be sought for; it should come. If we work, love may meet us in life; if not, we have something still, beyond all price.

Oh young girls! waiting listlessly for some one to come and marry you; wasting the glorious spring time of your lives sowing nothing but vanity, what a barren autumn will come to you! You are trying hard to make yourselves agreeable and attractive by dress and frivolity, and all this time your noblest parts lie sleeping. Arouse yourselves! Awake! Be the best that God has made you. Do not be contented to be charming and fascinating; be noble, be useful, be wise.

To many of you the question comes direct, whether you will accept a dependent, ornamental and useless position, or an independent and hard working one. Never hesitate for one moment; grasp the hand that points to work and freedom. Shake the hand with thanks of refusal, which offers you a home and "all the advantages of city society-until you are married." Say that you prefer to pay your own way in the world, that you love an honorable independence better than to live on charity, though gilded with all the graces of

hospitality and affection. Plan for yourselves a life of active single blessedness and usefulness. Be sure this is nobler and happier than many married lives, and not a hell at all, as some tell you; and is the way, too, to secure a happy marriage, if that is your destiny.

Apply this old theological doctrine to yourselves: *Cultivate a willingness to be damned*, and you will be, if not certainly saved, at least much more likely to be, than if you tried all the time to effect your own salvation.

Wise young men, exposed to all the uncertainties of fortune in this age of excessive hazard and frequent revulsion, ought to be very cautious about assuming the support of a human being unaccustomed to be anybody's helpmeet.

If women were in active life, mixing much with men, the common attraction of sex merely would not be so much felt, but rather the attractions of natures especially adapted to each other.

———"Whoever says  
To a loyal woman, 'Love and work with me,'  
Will get fair answer, if the work and love,  
Being good themselves, are good for her, the best  
She was born for. Women of a softer mood,  
Surprised by men when scarce awake to life,  
Will sometimes only hear the first word, Love,  
And catch up with it any kind of work,  
Indifferent, so that dear Love go with it.  
I do not blame such women, though for love  
They pick much oakum."

"Certainly it would make unmarried women happier to have professions. But is it not discouraging to give a girl a training for a trade when we know that if she marries she will most surely give it up? She must, you know, if she has children, and nine out of ten women do marry and have children."

Taking your statement as true, which, by-the-bye, it is not, (for, of women at the age of twenty and upwards, 43 out of the 100 in England and Wales are unmarried,)\* we can answer that it is worth while.

\* And a very large proportion in New England also, probably 30.

1st, A girl will make a better wife for having had such serious training. 2dly, Your daughter may not marry. It is your duty to provide for that possibility; and she will surely be ill, miserable, or go mad, if she has no occupation. 3dly, It may be years before your daughter finds a husband. It is your duty to give her worthy work, or to allow her to choose it; and certainly she is more likely to be attractive and to get a good husband if she is cheerful and happy in some work, than if she, being miserable and longing for a change, clutches at the first offer made her. 4thly, suppose the man she may love is poor, by her labor she can help to form their mutual home. Birds, both cock and hen, help one another to build their nest. 5thly, your daughter may be left to act as both father and mother to children dependent on her for daily bread.

But is it certain that a girl will give up her occupation when married? There are thousands of married women who are in want of a pursuit—a profession. It is a mistake to suppose marriage gives occupation enough to employ all the faculties of all women. To bring a family of 12 children into the world is not in itself a noble vocation, or always a certain benefit to humanity. To be a noble woman is better than being mother to a noble man; and also the best way of accomplishing that great work!

Christ was teaching noble truths in inspired language: a poor Jewish woman standing in the crowd, listening eagerly, and carried away by his divine eloquence, burst out into this exclamation: "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." I can imagine Christ, as she began to speak, looking hopefully towards her thinking a new worker for the truth had sprung up, and then, as he heard the words, dropping his eyes to the ground disappointed. "But he said, Yea: rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." The woman's words

are pitiful and touching, as they let us into the whole object and destiny of women's lives in the East, and they have been repeated with variations in all countries and all succeeding ages, while Christ's simple straightforward answer, cutting direct at the root of the matter, has been very little marked or understood.

Are there not quite enough women carrying on business, professions, different works after marriage, to prove that it is possible, and much for the benefit of husbands and children? It is absurd to look to remote consequences and possibilities; all we can do is to walk straight on the little bit of way we see clearly with our foggy vision. If it be right for girls to ask for work, give it to them. If your daughter says, "Teach me a trade," you have no right to refuse her. She may have to earn her own living; and hard indeed will be the struggle, if, with no training, no habits of work, she enters into competition with the skilled workers of the world, and those who have habits of hard application. Every human being should work; no one should owe bread to any but his or her parents. A child is dependent on its parents for bread as a child: idiots and imbeciles must be fed all their lives; but rational beings ask nothing from their parents save the means of gaining their own livelihood. Fathers have no right to cast the burden of the support of their daughters on other men. It lowers the dignity of women; and tends to prostitution, whether legal or in the streets. As long as fathers regard the sex of a child as a reason why it should not be taught to gain its own bread, so long must women be degraded. Adult women must not be supported by men if they are to stand as dignified rational beings before God. Esteem and friendship would not give nor accept such a position; and Love is destroyed by it. How fathers, knowing men, can give up their daughters to be placed in such a degrading position, is difficult to understand. Human nature is better than human institutions; and there is, in spite

of all the difficulties and dangers, a good deal of happiness in married life. But how much misery that might be prevented! Women must have work if they are to form equal unions. Work will enable women to free themselves from petty characteristics, and therefore ennoble marriage. The happiest married life we can recall ever to have seen is the life of two workers, a man and a woman equal in intellectual gifts and loving hearts; the union between them being founded in their mutual work.

Women who act as house-keepers, nurses, and instructors of their children, often do as much for the support of the household as their husbands; and it is very unfair for men to speak of supporting a wife and children when such is the case. When a woman gives up a profitable employment to be governess to her own family, she earns her right to live. We war against idleness, whether of man or woman, and every one is idle who is not making the best use of the faculties nature has given him.

How often dreary years of waiting for marriage might be saved by the woman doing just so much work as would keep her soul alive and her heart from stagnation, not to say corruption! We know an instance, a type of thousands. B, a young man, was engaged to M; they were both without fortunes. B worked for years to gain enough money to marry upon. M lived as young ladies usually do—doing nothing but reading novels and “practising.” She became nervous, hysterically ill, and at last died of consumption. B, overworked and struck with grief, became mad. I could add a score of such cases. Ask medical men the effects of idleness in women. Look into lunatic asylums, then you will be convinced something must be done for women.

Think of the noble capacities of a human being. Look at your daughters, your sisters, and ask if they are what they might be if their faculties had been

drawn forth ; if they had liberty to grow, to expand, to become what God means them to be. When you see girls and women dawdling in shops, choosing finery, and talking scandal, do you not think they might have been better with some serious training ?

Do you think women are happy ? Look at unmarried women of thirty-five—the prime of life. Do you know one who is healthy and happy ? If you do, she is one who has found her work :—“Blessed is he who has found his work ; let him ask no other blessedness.” “My God ! *if I had anything to do*, I could bear this grief,” said a girl whose lover was just dead. Another, living only in her lover who was a sailor, saw a false statement in a newspaper, that he was drowned—she lost her reason instantly and never recovered it. We do not say that if she had been a medical student or a watchmaker, that the grief might not have turned her brain, but most certainly she would have had a stronger and a stouter reason, and some cause to wish to live. It is a noble thing even to make good watches, and well worth living for.

Women should teach languages and oratory. Aspasia taught rhetoric to Socrates. The voice of women is more penetrating, distinct, delicate, and correct in delivering sounds than that of men, fitting them to teach both oratory and languages better.

All the work of philanthropy is imperfect unless women co-operate with men.

When we are down in the strong black tide of ignorance and misery in Westminster or St. Giles, we exclaim—

“ Oh, that we now had here  
But one in ten thousand of those women in England  
Who do no work to-day !”

And so in all places might we say, if women were but fitted to the work.

Great is the work to be done in the world, but few are the skilled laborers.

## TWO FALLACIES.

It seems hardly worth while to say that there is a prejudice against women accepting money for their work. But there is one; therefore it is as well to say a few words upon it.

Money is only a convenient representative of desirable things. It would be well if all should part with what they make, or what they do well for money; they will then know that some really want what they produce. What they produce will go to the right people, and they, the producers, will gain a power; for money is a power. Money may be a power to do good. If for your needlework you get money, you know that your work goes to some one who wants it. You are not always sure of that if you give it away; and you gain a power of sending a child to school, of buying a good book to lend to the ignorant, of sending a sick person to a good climate, &c. We may give this power up to another whom we consider can use it better than we, but money is a power which we have not the right lightly to reject. It is a responsibility which we must accept.

Of course, we may give our labor, our work, our money, where we think right; but it is as well to exchange them sometimes for money, to be sure we are as valuable as we think. Some work is beyond all price, and many prices are far beyond the value of the works.

Most of the work of the world must be done for money. It is of the utmost importance to make that work "stuff o' conscience." To make all work done for money honorable, is what we should strive for. To insist on work for love of Christ only, to cry up gratuitous work, is a profound and mischievous mistake. It tends to lessen the dignity of necessary labor; as if work for daily bread could not be for love of Christ too! Well-done work is what we want. All work,

whether for love or money, should be well done; this is what we should insist upon.

Another common fallacy:—It is often said that ladies should not take the bread out of the mouths of the poor working-man or woman by selling in their market.

The riches and material well-being of the country consist in the quantity of stuff in the country to eat and to wear, houses to live in, books to read, rational objects of recreation and elevation, as music and pictures, &c., &c. Any one who puts more of any of these things into the country, adds to its riches and happiness. The more of these things, the easier is it for all to get. Do not think of money until you see this fact. This is why we bless steam-engines; this is why we would bless women. Steam-engines did at first take the bread out of a few mouths, but how many thousands have they fed for one they have starved!

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

One of the practical impediments in the way of women working is the inconvenient modern dress, which is only suited to carpeted rooms, where it appears graceful and proper; in the streets, it is disreputable, dirty, and inconvenient. As long as women will not get out of their "long clothes," they deserve to be treated as babies. There are signs that the

—"just medium will be found  
A little lower than the knee, a little higher than the ground."

The ladies of the English aristocracy, when they lead an active life in the country, do not go about with draggle-tail petticoats, like the working-women in our towns, but in short petticoats, thick-ribbed, brown, blue, or barred stockings, and solid Balmoral boots.

How many girls are prevented from continuing their attendance at school, college, workshop, atelier, musical academy by colds caught from going without proper waterproof clothing, and stout shoes or boots!

To sum up. Women want work both for the health of their minds and bodies. They want it often because they must eat and because they have children and others dependent on them—for all the reasons that *men want work*. They are placed at a great disadvantage in the market of work because they are not skilled laborers, and are therefore badly paid. They rarely have any training. It is the duty of fathers and mothers to give their daughters this training.

All experience proves that the effect of the independence of women upon married life is good.

The time has arrived when women are wanted in the Commonwealth. John Milton said the Commonwealth "ought to be but one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body." Our idea differs from this grand but incomplete conception. We rather think the Commonwealth should be—

"Inclusive of all gifts and faculties  
On either sex bestowed, knit up in strengths  
Of man and woman both; hers even as his,  
And tempered with the finest tenderness  
Of love betwixt these two."

Many have sneered and sneer at women entering professions, and talk of the absurdity of their being in the army, mixing in political life, going to sea, or being barristers. It is not very likely many women will enter these professions; women will rather prefer those nobler works which have in them something congenial to their moral natures. Perhaps we may say that women will only enter those professions which are destined to be perpetual, being consistent with the highest moral development of humanity, which war is not. The arts, the sciences, commerce, and the education of the young in all its branches—these will most strongly attract them.

THE END.



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