
FANNY FERN
GINGER-SNAPS

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BY

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First published in 2002 ebook by www.saptarshee.in India in 21.08.2023

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Typeset/Printed by Krutika Printers, mangalwedha

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DINNER-PARTIES.

O fasten as many drags as possible to the social machinery of to-day, seems to be the first idea of hospitality, which, there is every reason to fear, will gradually be smothered in the process.

Perhaps the lady who gives the dinner-party would really prefer a plain dinner with her friend Mrs. Jones, than all the elaborate dinners she is in the habit of giving and attending; but her husband likes wines and French cookery, and would consider anything else a poor compliment to a guest; and so there's an end.

And now, what are these fine dinners? Just this: a pleasant gleam of silver and china; a lovely disposition of fruit and flowers; a great deal of dress, or undress, on the part of the ladies; much swallow-tail, and an exquisite bit of cravat and kid-glove, on the part of the gentlemen. Brains—as the gods please; but always a procession of dishes, marched on and marshalled off, for the requisite number of tedious hours, during which you eat you know not what, because you must be ready with your answer for your elbow neighbor, or your *vis-a-vis*; during which, you taste much wine and nibble much confectionery, and finish up with coffee; and under the combined influence of all this you sink supinely into a soft chair or sofa, and the "feed" is over.

Everybody there feels just as you do. Everybody would like to creep into some quiet corner, and be let alone, till the process of digestion has had a chance.

Instead—they throw a too transparent enthusiasm into the inquiry, "How's your mother?" If the gods are kind, and there has been an inroad of measles or fever, the narrator may possibly give you ten minutes' reprieve from pumping up from beneath that dinner another query about "the baby." But if he—or she, too—is laboring, like yourself, with duck and quail, and paté and oyster, and wine and fruit and bon-bons, then may a good Providence put it into the distracted brain of the hostess to set some maiden a-foul of the piano!

Oh, but that is blessed! no matter what she plays, how hard she thumps, or how loud she screeches. Blessed—to lean back, and fold your kid gloves over your belt, and never move them till you applaud the performance, of which you know, nor care, any more than who struck Billy Patterson.

This over, you see a gentlemen coming towards you. You know by his looks, he too is suffering the pangs of repletion. Good heavens! how full of deceit is his smile, as he fastens on you, thinking *you* will talk! Mistaken man! you smile too, and both together agree that "the weather has been fine of late." This done, you look helplessly, with the untold pain of dumb animals, in each other's faces, and then glance furtively about to see if that piano-young-woman really means to leave your

anguish unassuaged. She does. Hum!—you make an errand across the room to pick up a suppositious glove you dropped—and get rid of the parasite.

At last!—relief—there is your husband. *How* glad he is to see you! It's really worth going to the dinner-party to witness that man's affection for you at that moment. Now he can yawn behind his glove. Now he takes a seat *so* near, that no man or woman can interrupt his lazy heaven. He even smiles at you from very gladness of heart, and in thick utterance tells you, in order to keep you from going from his side, that "he don't see but you look as well as any woman in the room." You only needed that unwonted display of gallantry from the hypocritical wretch, to rise immediately and leave him to his fate, though you should, in doing it, rush madly on your own.

And this is "a dinner-party." For this men and women empty their purses, and fill their decanters and wardrobes, and merge their brains in their stomachs, and—are in the fashion!

Better is a leg of mutton and caper-sauce, and much lively talk, whensoever and wheresoever a friend, with or without an invitation, cares enough about you and yours with impromptu friendship to "drop in." Best clothes, best dishes, best wine, best parlors!—what are they, with rare exceptions, but extinguishers of wit and wisdom and digestion and geniality. Who will inaugurate us a little common-sense?

Queen Victoria—how glad I am she had such a good, loving husband, to compensate her for the misery of being a queen—tried her best to abolish the custom, prevalent in England at dinner, of the gentlemen remaining to guzzle wine after the ladies left. I am aware that guzzle is an unladylike word; but, as no other fits in there, I shall use it. Well—she succeeded only in shortening the guzzling period—not in abolishing it; so those consistent men remained, to drink toasts to "lovely women," whose backs they were so delighted to see retreating through the door.

What of it? Why, simply this, that Queen Victoria did what she could to civilize her own regal circle; and that she set a good precedent for American women of to-day to follow. I fail to see why, when a hostess has carefully watched the dishes and glasses come and go, at her husband's dinner-party, to the obstruction of all rational conversation, save by agonized spasms,—I fail to see why, when the gentlemen guests have eaten to satiety, and conversation might be supposed to be at last possible, why, at that precise, enjoyable period, the lady of the house should be obliged to accompany the empty plates to regions unknown and uncared for. This seems to me a question well worthy of consideration in this year of our Lord, 1868. It strikes me, rather an inglorious abdication for a woman of intelligence, who may be supposed to understand and take an interest in other things than the advance and retreat of salad, and ragouts, oysters, and chicken. I call it a relic of barbarism, of which men of intelligence should be ashamed. Then what advantage has the woman who cultivates her mental powers, over the veriest fool? It is an insult to her. But you say, all women are not thoughtful or intelligent. Very true: and why should they be—save that they owe it to their own self-respect—when gentlemen thus offer premiums for

insipidity?—why should they inform themselves upon any subjects but those of dressing well and feeding well?

It is a satisfaction to know that there are gentlemen, who endorse the other side of the question. There was lately a dinner given in New York to a literary gentleman of distinction. One of the gentlemen invited to attend it, said to his wife: "It is a shame that ladies should not attend this dinner. *You* ought to be there, and many other ladies who are authors." Acting upon this impulse, he suggested to the committee that ladies should be invited. The answer was: First—"It would be so awkward for the ladies. Secondly—there were very few literary ladies compared to the number of literary gentlemen." Now as to the question of "awkwardness," the boot, I think, was on the other foot; and if the ladies were awkward,—which was not a complimentary supposition,—why should the gentlemen be to blame for it? And if there were "few lady authoresses," why not ask the wives of the *editors* who were to be present?

No—this was not the reason.

What was it? *Tobacco*—yes, sir, tobacco! I don't add wine—but I might. In short, these men would be obliged to conduct themselves as gentlemen were ladies present; and they wanted a margin left for the reverse. They preferred a bar-room atmosphere to the refining presence of "lovely woman," about whom they wished to hiccup at a safe distance.

Perhaps, in justice, I should add, that it was suggested that they might perhaps see the animals feed from the "musicians' balcony," or listen to the speeches "through the crack of a door," with the servants, or in some such surreptitious and becoming and complimentary manner, which a woman of spirit and intelligence would, of course, be very likely to do.

To conclude, I trust those gentlemen who are in the habit of bemoaning "the frivolity of our women, and their sad addictedness to long milliner's bills," will reckon up the cost of cigars and wine at these dinners, from which ladies are excluded; and while they are on the anxious seat, on the economy question, ask themselves whether, putting other reasons out of the question, the presence of ladies, on these occasions, would not contribute greatly to *reduce their dinner expenses*?

I lately read an article in a London paper, in which "the woman-question" was treated in the following enlightened manner: The writer avowed his dislike to the cultivation of woman's intellect; since men had enough intellect, in their intercourse with each other; and wanted only with woman that charming, childish prattle and playfulness, which was so refreshing to the male creature, when he needed relief and amusement!

The author of these advanced ideas didn't state whether he considered these *childish*, *prattling* women fit to be mothers and heads of families; probably that was too puerile a question to consider in the same breath with the amusement they might afford men by the total absence of intelligence.

It is a wonder that Christians of different denominations do not see, that while they are spending the precious hours contending for the non-essentials, which are but as the fringe to the "wedding-garment," that souls are slipping past them into eternity, uncared-for and unprepared. One is often painfully struck with this thought, in reading, or hearing, the acrid disputes of mistaken, but well-meaning, zealots.

THE BRIDE'S NEW HOUSE.

PICK and span, thorough and fresh, from attic to cellar. Pretty carpets and pictures, and glass, and silver, and china, and upholstery, and a pretty bride for the mistress! Receptions over, she looks about her. Hark! what's that? A mutiny down stairs! She didn't foresee so speedy a grapple with Intelligence offices, even if any at all. She remembers, 'tis true, that the coachman came one day to announce to mamma that "the cook was stiff drunk," and the dinner consequently in a state of indefinite postponement; and she remembers that a new cook soon took her place; and she has a misty recollection of a chamber-maid who left suddenly because she was requested not to use the cologne, and then fill up the bottle with water; and she knows another chamber-maid arrived before night, who had so tender a conscience that she couldn't say the ladies were "out," when they were in the bath, or in bed, and yet would appropriate handkerchiefs and ribbons and gloves without even winking. Still, she never thought of being bothered in this way, when *she* was married. It was all to be a rosy dream of love and quiet and comfort, and immunity from vulgar frets. "Well, she goes down into her kitchen, and inquires into the mutiny, and finds that the chamber-maid has called the cook a 'nasty thing;' and both are standing in the middle of the kitchen-floor like two cats on top of a fence, neither of which will give way for the other, snarling, spitting, and growling, and making the fur fly at intervals. She tries to pacify them, but they out-scream each other, till her head cracks, defending themselves. She goes up to George, with both hands over her ears, and asks him 'if it isn't dreadful?'" He says, with an executive wave of his conjugal hand, "Send them both off, and go to an Intelligence-office, my dear, and get others." *He* thinks "going to an Intelligence-office," and breathing the concentration of "marasmus" in a little den ten feet square, for an hour, is to be the end of it. He don't take into account the "character" that is to be hunted up at the last place Sally lived in, up in Twenty-thousandth street, the mistress of which will keep his little wife waiting an hour to dress, before she comes down; while Sally is meantime airing her heels in the Intelligence-office, whither the new bride is to return and report, affirmatively or the reverse. If affirmatively, George supposes again that there's an end of it. Not a bit. Now, Biddy is to be instructed an hour or two every day, where to find spoons, forks, knives, towels, napkins, brooms, dusters, and where and how to use them, and at the end of a week's education, she will never once set a table without harrowing mistakes, even if, at the end of that time, her opinion of some other servant in the house does not necessitate her "finding another place;" or because, though ignorant of all she professed thoroughly to understand when she came, she objects to being "followed 'round".

'Tis true the little bride might dodge the Intelligence(?) offices and "advertise," thus holding a servant's levee for several days in her parlors and hunting "characters"

at immense distances afterwards; or, she might take a list of advertisements, and scour the city in disagreeable localities, up pairs of stairs innumerable, to find the advertisers "just engaged," if she prefer that. Either way, *the grapple* is to be met, in the person of cook, chambermaid, or waitress, or all three, every few weeks; and all this, though the little bride may ask no questions of the speedy disappearance of the household stores, or how many people unknown to her are fed at all hours out of them. Although she may prefer not to see that her damask table-napkins are used for dish-towels, or that the mattresses are never turned over when the beds are made, or that the broom never invades the corners of any apartment, but merely takes a *swish* through the centre. She may also be silent when she is told that a closet has been cleaned and put in order, although to her certain knowledge it has never been touched; for is not the virtuous and indignant rejoinder always ready, "D'ye think I'd *lie*, mum?"

Now, what comfort is her pretty silver, half cleaned, and bruised and scratched in the process? What consolation her pretty dishes, with the handles knocked off? What pleasure her china nicked at the edges? Which way soever she turns, waste, ignorance, and obstinacy stare her in the face. And is her life to be all this? Yes, except an interval now and then, when she lies with a little one on her arm, with a doctor and a nurse between her and the "grapple;" and the vision, as she gets better, of hunting up a nurse-maid, who, horror of horrors! will be "always under her nose."

I do not say there are not exceptions to this gloomy picture, but they are rare. Sometimes a godsend of an aunt, or housekeeper, stands between the mistress of the house and all this "how not to do it." But till Intelligence-offices have something besides the raw material to offer on the one hand, or on the other, servants who insist upon performing your work "as Mrs. Jones did," and who resent as an insult the mildest intimation that you prefer your own way, and object totally to your going over your house in every part once a day, to see if things are right—while this state of things continues, the mistress, be she young or old, must needs take refuge from this grapple in hotel life, or spend her existence watching the arrival of emigrant ships.

No man has any call to speak or write on this subject, since they know nothing about it. One of them recently explained the present wastefulness of servants to be caused "by the extravagant way of living indulged in by their mistresses." Waiving the truth or falsehood of the charge, I rise to inquire, whether the dishonesty and fast-living of clerks, be not attributable to the fashionable vices and lavish expenditures of their business employers. Having aired this little question, I proceed to say, that the dissatisfaction with regard to servants is undoubtedly every day greatly on the increase. In most instances, their utter disqualifications for the high wages they demand, are patent to every observing housekeeper. If the lady of the house wishes her work properly and systematically done, she must, in addition to paying such wages, do half the work herself; or, which amounts to the same thing, oversee these incompetent servants; who, at the end of even two months' teaching, either cannot, or

will not, learn to do it faithfully. They who slight their work the most, are of course most unwilling to have the supervision. Indeed these very servants will often say, "that having done chamber-work, or cooking, for such a number of years in New York, they don't need *any* lady to instruct them how!" So that the mistress has to choose between a constant and irritating war of words, or a mismanaged household. To preserve one's patience or serenity, under such household friction, or to get time for anything else, is a very difficult task indeed. Now every *right-minded* mistress of a household desires, not only to have it well ordered, but to feel an interest in the welfare of those women who serve her: she would be glad, if they have a sorrow, to lighten it; if they are sick, to nurse them kindly; and in every way to help them to feel, that she does not look upon them as "beasts of burden," but as human beings.

I affirm that the present generation of servants neither care for nor understand this. All they want is, to be "let severely alone." Not to be "followed up," as they phrase it. If you hear the area-bell ringing punctually every day when your meals are served, they expect the fact, quite ignored by you, that some big nephew, or cousin, or lover, or uncle, with a robust appetite, comes at those times for his bowl of tea, or coffee, or a bit of meat, with some warm vegetables. They will, if found out, lie about it, with an unblushing effrontery which is perfectly astounding; or, if well up to New York area ways, will, with arms akimbo, inquire, "Well, what's a cup of tay, or a sup of coffee, or a bit of mate, now and thin, to rich folks?" and that although this may and does happen every day, and two or three times a day. As to cultivating any good understanding, or feeling, with such unscrupulous servants, it is simply impossible. There is no foundation in them for any such superstructure. Not long since, one such servant was requested at a time of sickness in the family, "to step about the house softly in the morning, as the patient had a sleepless night." She stared defiantly at the person making this gentle request, and inquired in a loud voice, "*if this wasn't a free country?*" Not long after this she smashed a very pretty butter-dish; and when told that it just cost five dollars, she loftily inquired, "*Well, what's five dollars?*"

Now what progress can even an intelligent, well-meaning, kind-intentioned mistress make with such a savage element as this?

One replies, "Oh, don't keep them, of course; get others." Very well—you wear out a pair of boots "*getting* others." To your horror, you discover that the new cook is subject "to attacks" which confine her to her bed, with—a gin bottle! till she feels like convalescing. The last lady she lived with, in the "recommendation" with which she got her own neck out of the noose, put yours into it by omitting to mention this little fact; so that again you must start on your travels "*Intelligence*"-ward.

During these changes of programme, a house gets pretty well demoralized; every servant who comes, expects to find nothing to do in the way of putting it to rights; and often when her lazy dream in this respect is realized, she will be very far, when *she* leaves, from putting her successor's mind, or bones either, at rest on this point.

All this is sufficiently rasping and vexatious. One lady remarked to me, "Oh! as for me, I neither know nor see, anything that they do. I have to choose between this or a lunatic asylum. I can't fight all the time; and if you change, there's only a new *kind* of misery."

"Your husband must have a long purse, my dear," I remarked. She shrugged her shoulders, and asked me "where I bought my new bonnet?"

Now, this state of things is deplorable enough. I can very well understand, and sympathize with, the disgust many right-minded women arrive at, after a panorama of such Sallys and Betseys have passed through their pretty houses, intent only on high wages, waste, and plunder. To fight it, only sours one's temper, and wastes one's life. There's no right feeling about them; they have neither conscience nor industry. "I have done my best," said a lady to me, "to teach and civilize and humanize them, but I tell you there's nothing to work upon; so, after giving my orders in the morning, I will neither hear nor see anything more about it."

Well, another lady will keep on her feet all day, trying to bring things to a focus; trying the impossible task of putting brains where there is nothing but a great void; trying to encourage—trying to lighten burdens by shouldering half herself, or getting substitutes to help; and thus by superhuman efforts she gets her husband's little culinary comforts all attended to at the right time, and every disagreeable thing put under lock and key before his return; but she sits down opposite him at the table with no appetite, with not an idea in her aching head; the well-ordered repast only representing back-aches and vexation of spirit.

Now this is rather a steep price to pay for housekeeping, and that is why the cunning little lady above referred to dodged it, and saved incipient wrinkles.

In conclusion, I beg leave to suggest to ladies that they must stop "recommending" dishonest or incapable servants, merely because "they don't want a quarrel with them." In the next place, if it be true that the keepers of intelligence-offices, for a stipulated sum, will furnish "a character" for any kind of girl able to furnish the money, is it not time something were done about this?

Finally, in the name of all the New York ladies, *I* know, or have heard speak, in private, on the subject, let China, or Africa, or Professor Blot with his travelling cook-shop, and all the laundry establishments, come speedily to the rescue, and find us a way of escape. If you ask, by way of postscript, if there are *no* exceptions to the kind of servants I have described above, I answer by asking you, how often you find a four-leaved clover, or a black holly-hock, or a green rose?

Let the poor wretch, smarting under the lash of the critic, remember that indigestion has lent point and bitterness to many a sentence which would else have been kindly. He can add to this, that critics are subject, like others, to envy, ambition, and little uncharitablenesses, which grow out of them. Also, that "mutual admiration"

societies are *not* extinct. Also, that some critics look through political, some through religious, and some through atheistical spectacles; and if this don't assuage his anguish, let him remember that a thousand years hence both the critic and himself will have passed into happy oblivion.

THE HAPPY LOT OF A SEXTON.

OT a bad thing to be the sexton of a church. In the first place, he gets a conspicuous start in life, by advertising on the outer wall of the church, his perfect willingness to bury all the parish in which he carries on his cheerful business,—a business which can never be dull with him, because somebody is always dying, and somebody else is always being born for the same end. Then Sunday comes regularly once a week, so that his "shop" never closes, and consequently always wants his broom of reform. Then the sexton has his little alleviations, when he has had enough of the sermon: he can make an errand out in the vestibule, after imaginary bad children, who might disturb the minister, or to see that the outer door don't creak or bang un-Sabbatically. When he gets tired of that, he can sit comfortably down on his stool near the door, which he can tilt back on its hind legs, out of view of all critical worshippers (except *me*), and then, and there, he can draw out that omnipresent and national jack-knife, which is his ever-present solace in every time of need. First—he can clean his nails, and pare them, varying the performance by biting off their refractory edges. Then he can commence scratching off any little spots on his trousers or coat with the point of the same. When this little exercise is concluded, and the sermon is *not*, he can draw from another pocket a case-comb, and put those fine touches to his hair which the early church-bell had interfered with. It is tiresome on him then for a few minutes, unless some impertinent sunbeam gilds the minister's sacerdotal nose, and gives him an excuse for going up in the gallery to lower a curtain, in that dexterous manner which only a professional can compass. By this time "seventeenthly" having been concluded by the minister, the sexton hurries to the church-door, doubling up with a dexterous twist any aisle-chairs which have done duty *pro tem*. and tucking them in their appropriate corner, and then takes his position in the porch, the most important personage present save the minister himself. To the questions, "Is it the clergymen of this church who has just preached?" addressed him by some stranger, and "Is there to be an afternoon or an evening service?" and "Can you tell me where is the clergyman's residence?" and "Will you hand this note to the clergyman?" etc., etc., he returns a prompt and proud answer. And, even when Miss Belinda Jones steps to his elbow, and requests that he will pay a little more attention to ventilating the church between the services, and in fact during the week, in order that she may escape the infliction of her usual Sunday headache; and when she expatiates touchingly on the blessing and healthfulness and cheapness of fresh air, and his Christian duty to apportion a sufficient quantity to each individual to sustain life, and that meek and quiet spirit that is enjoined; even then, he bows respectfully, nor mentions that, were ventilation thus insured by open windows, and the life of the audience prolonged, it might make him a little more trouble in dusting the cushions, which he could by no means permit. The polite sexton does not mention this, nor that

he "hates fidgetty females" but he bows politely and affirmatively, locks up the bad air in the church all the same, and goes home to his roast-beef and his babies.

Upon his box the hackman sits and reads the newspaper, while his blanketed horses wait for the coming customer. In the cars the mechanic holds it, hastily running over its columns at this his only time for reading. Even in the ferry-boat the clerk and school-girl bend their heads, absorbed and well pleased. At places of amusement, before the curtain rises, the audience beguile the time by conning its pages; and even early comers to church improve the minutes by perusing the Sunday-school papers before the services begin. With these facts before us, who shall estimate the influence, for good or evil, of the newspaper? Who shall question the dignity of an editor's position, or measure his responsibilities?

LITERARY ASPIRANTS.

T is the most astonishing thing that persons who have not sufficient education to spell correctly, to punctuate properly, to place capital letters in the right places, should, when other means of support fail, send MSS. for publication. Now before me lies just such a MS., accompanying which is a letter requesting me to read it, give the writer my opinion of it, and hand the same to some publisher.

Now, here is my opinion. In the first place, every editor is crowded with offered MSS. from all sources. Secondly, many of the writers would not mind not receiving pay for the same, could they only see that MS. in print in a certain journal that they have selected. In fact, many times they would rather *pay for having it inserted* than to have it declined. This much for the glut in the market.

Then, after this, an editor makes his own selections. It may be he has already a sufficient corps of contributors, and does not care for, and will not entertain, any fresh applications. But suppose this is not the case. Suppose he looks over, or employs a person to look over, these various MSS. What chance, I ask you, among the myriads, has a MS., every other word of which is misspelt, and which is wrongly punctuated, and without paragraphs or capitals, and illegibly written beside, and, *crowning bother of all*, written on *both* sides of the page, over those which are just the reverse; which are no trouble to read, which require no revision, and which contain *ideas* as well as words?

Very well: after all that, an editor has to decide, among even these *properly prepared* MSS., which is best suited to *his* individual paper, about which he has, and very properly, his own notions and ideas. Now an article may be well written, and yet not be the thing he wishes for his paper, although it might be the very thing desired for another. Well—he of course rejects it, as he has an undoubted right to do. He could not carry on his paper or magazine successfully on any other principle. You would not ask a grocer to buy a piece of calico because you wanted money for that calico. He would immediately say, "It is not in my line of business; I can make no use of it. I am sorry you are in want of money; but business is business. I will make you a *present* of three or four dollars, as the case may be; but your calico is of no use to me."

Now you could see the force of *that*: why can't you be made to understand that it is just so, only a *great deal more so*, with an editor?

Perhaps you say to me, "Ah, you forget the time when *you* began." I beg your pardon, but I do not. Many a weary tramp I had; much pride I put in my pocket, and few pennies, even with the advantage of a good education, and a properly prepared MS., and the initiation "of reading proof"—for my father, who was an editor, when I was not more than twelve years old—before I succeeded.

It is *because* I know; it is because I have been behind the scenes, that I tell you plainly the preliminary steps to be taken before you "send MSS. for publication," to any one.

Then, don't you see, it is not agreeable to write thus to a person who quite puts these preliminary steps out of sight, either through ignorance or conceit: My Dear Sir, or my Dear Madam, this wont do! you have neither education nor ideas. This appears to them unfeeling; but it is not. It is doing such persons a much greater kindness than you could do them by luring them on with the idea of reward, thus wasting their time, which might be used *successfully* in other directions, only to end in mortification and disappointment.

History and Biography show—perhaps you say to me—that many great men and great writers are deficient in spelling and chirography. Yes, that is true; but have you not admitted that they were "*great* writers"? An editor may be content to keep on sifting, if he is sure of finding *wheat*; but when the result is *only* chaff, life is too short for it; and his necessity to live, equally with your own, too pressing.

One specimen is as good as a thousand. My last was from a young person, who tells me that she is tired of sewing for a living, and wants to write; also, that she wants to write for a certain editor. Also, that this editor would do much better, were he to take the large sums he pays to his favorite contributors, who do *not* need it, and "assist struggling genius." Also, that "she wishes me to remember that *I* once struggled myself." Also, that she wishes me to inform her how I went to work to get a publisher.

Now, to begin with, this young woman misspelt every other word in her letter, besides entirely ignoring capitals and punctuation. This of course settled in the outset the question of her present literary possibilities. Editors do not expect to find these things for their correspondents; at least I know one who don't; and when he "pays large sums of money to his favorite contributors" for supplying this very lack, with ideas included, I presume he knows what he is about, and I think he has the same right to prefer good spelling in his paper that the writer of this letter has to prefer literary work to sewing.

Now as to "how I got a publisher." *I didn't get him. He got me.* And when this young woman produces anything a publisher wants, or thinks he wants, she will probably have a call from one too.

Next, I don't forget "that I once struggled myself." It adds zest to my life every hour to remember it. I love the little cosey house I live in, as I never else could do, because I earned the money to buy it myself; and I thank God that, if I lost it to-day, and coupons and banks also gave out, that I am hale and strong enough, and have the will and the courage, even at this late day, to begin anew. So much for that. But I do *not* believe it to be kindness to advise this uneducated young woman to throw up her present means of support, how disagreeable soever it may be, for one, that in her present illiterate state is utterly hopeless.

Scores of such letters I get, so that I have sometimes thought I would have a printed circular, embodying the above obvious difficulties in the way of "literary aspirants," and mail it on receipt of their epistles. To-day I concluded that I would, once for all, air my views on the subject. After this, every letter from a "literary aspirant" *which is misspelled* goes into my waste-paper basket.

Having said all this, I may, in justice to myself, own up to the fact, that time and again I have given up my own most imperative writing to correct, and *try* to make presentable, MSS. for which I was requested to "*find a publisher*," and which I knew had not the ghost of a chance, and all because *I did not*, as this young woman advises me, "forget that I once struggled myself." I never received one word of thanks for it, but instead dissatisfaction that "*somehow*" I had not insured success. I remember, in one instance, having spent nearly a month over a book in MS., laying aside a book of my own, then in process of preparation; often sitting up late at night, because I could not else get time enough to devote to it; the writer of this MS. repaying me only with abuse and defamation, as I afterwards learned.

So my conscience is quite clear on the subject of remembering, and in the best way too, my own early struggles. I have tried, in this article to express myself so as not to be misunderstood. Still I have no doubt that some "literary aspirant," feeling himself or herself aggrieved, will haste to set me down an unfeeling wretch. I can stand it.

The man with good, firm health is rich.

So is the man with a clear conscience.

So is the parent of vigorous, happy children.

So is the editor of a *good* paper, with a big subscription list.

So is the clergyman whose coat the little children of his parish pluck, as he passes them on their play.

So is that wife who has the whole heart of a good husband.

So is the maiden whose horizon is not bounded by the "coming man," but who has a purpose in life, whether she ever meet him or not.

So is the young man who, laying his hand on his heart, can say, "I have treated every woman I ever saw as I should wish my sister treated by other men."

So is the little child who goes to sleep with a kiss on its lips, and for whose waking a blessing waits.

WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR THE LITTLE CHILDREN ON SUNDAY?

AKE them to church, of course," says one. Now, I don't think it is "of course," when I look about, and see little things of four and six years old, and sometimes younger, fidgetting and squirming in their out-door wrappings, in a hot, crowded, badly ventilated church, to whom the services are a dead language, and who prevent those around them from worship, through pity for their evident uncomfortableness. I don't think it is "of course" when I see this. To be sure, there are mothers whose pockets contain alleviations for this juvenile restlessness, in the shape of sugar-plums, or picture-books; but all the time they are being applied, the mother's eye must be on the child instead of the clergymen, lest sticky fingers intrude upon silk or velvet, or a too hasty rattling of leaves in reading the book drown the sound of the preacher's voice. "They should be taught to behave," gravely asserts some person, who, perhaps, has forgotten his own childhood, or has never been a parent. That is true: we only differ as to the question whether church is the place to pursue that education. "Well, suppose you keep a child of that age at home?" asks another. "Of course he ought not to play with his toys as on other days, and he can't read all day, and no one can read or talk all day to him, and what are you going to do then?" In the first place, I, for one, should never "take away its toys" before I could enable it to pass Sunday pleasantly without them; and, of course, I should not allow them directly to interfere with other persons' enjoyment of quiet on Sunday. It is a very difficult problem to solve, I know; but I am sure, to make Sunday a tedium and disgust, is not the way; we have all known too many sad instances of the terrible rebound of adult years from this un-wisdom. We have all known instances where "going to meeting" was *not* prematurely forced upon the restless little limbs of children, who have, when a little older, asked to accompany the family to worship, and been pleased to go. Nor would I deprive a child of its accustomed walk in the fresh air on that day; on the contrary, I should be most anxious that it should as usual enjoy the out-door brightness. I would also always have for that day some little pleasure which belonged especially to it. It may be some plain little cakes or nuts of which it was fond. I would always have on hand some stories to read, or to tell it, on that day. If possible, I would have flowers on Sunday placed at the child's plate; I would strive that Sunday should be the *cheerfullest* day of all the week to it—not a bugbear. I believe all this might be done, without disturbing any Christian's church-membership, or perilling any child's salvation. In the country it is much easier to make Sunday pleasant for children than in the city. You have only to let them stray into the garden or field, and be happy in the best way a little unformed mind can he. Or, if the weather interferes with this, the barn and the animals are a never-failing source of pleasure to it.

There are those who might think it "wicked" to do this. The wickedness, to me, consists in making Sunday, which should be a delight, such a tedium, that, in after years, whenever the word strikes upon the ear, or the day returns, the first impulse is to shun and evade it. Oh, let Sunday be what the memory of "mother's room" is to us all—radiant with perfume of flowers and sunshine. The bright spot to look back upon, when old age sits in the chimney-corner, with the sweet psalm from voices hushed by death, or far removed, still sounding in the ears; with the memory of happy faces over the Sunday meal; the glad "Good-morning" and the soft "Good-night."

Surely the God who opens the flowers on Sunday, and lets the birds sing, did not mean that we should close our eyes to the one or our ears to the other, or that we should throw a pall over the little children.

MY HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY.

HEN I live in the country, the front door of my house shall be made for use, and not for show; and the blinds and windows shall be thrown wide open from sunrise until sunset; and I will issue invitations to the bees and birds and butterflies to come in and out at their own convenience, without fear of molestation from me, or of danger to my furniture or belongings. If a few mosquitoes follow suit, I will accept them as a necessary evil, and not to be compared, in the way of annoyance, with that air of sepulchral gloom which, like a wet blanket of mist, surrounds the exterior of most country dwellings, where the men, women, and children skulk round like burglars to the *back* of the house to effect an entrance, and the closed door and blinds are suggestive of a corpse awaiting burial. And yet I think I understand how this bad custom came about. It was from many babies and much darning and baking, and the dread of impending fly-specks on the gilt frame encircling General Washington and the large looking-glass. But, dear friends, put a mahogany frame round the General, and banish the looking-glass, which will, in a few years, if you neglect all that makes home cheerful, reflect only the imprint of life's cares, instead of its pleasures and contents. "*They* are so very few," you say. Well, then the more necessity for letting in the sunshine. As I walk about, I notice the careworn, pallid faces of the wives and mothers about many of these country homes, and the careless untidiness of dress which, in a woman, means that she has given the whole thing up, either from overwork or lack of sympathy from the one person for whom the shining hair was once neatly combed, and the strip of white collar carefully pinned, although it might be late in the day before time was found to do these things. When I see these women at nightfall, in this neglectful dress, sitting alone upon the back door-step, while the husband and father has strolled off to some neighbor's, and lies flat on his stomach on the grass, with half a dozen other husbands and fathers, browsing like so many cattle, without a thought of those weary women, I fall to thinking how much life would be worth to me reduced to this utilitarian standard of cow and cabbage. Then I wonder if those women were to throw open the blinds and doors and windows of the front of the house, and smooth their hair a bit, and let one of the children pick some grasses and wild flowers for the mantel, and then tell their respective Johns and Toms to bring into the house the men they like to talk to at that hour, so that all could be jolly together, whether it wouldn't change things for the better. If that plan didn't work, do you know what I would do? I would shoulder my baby, and trot down the road to the nearest neighbor's, and let the old coffin of a house take care of itself. I *wouldn't* rust, anyhow.

Now, it may be that these women wouldn't know how miserable they were, if I didn't tell them of it. So much the worse, then. I only know that if life were *all work* to me, it should go hard but I would try to catch a sunbeam now and then, if it were only that the children might not be demoralized by growing up to look at me in the light of

a dray-horse; if it were only that my boys need not expect *their* wives to close their eyes and ears to the beauty and harmony which God had scattered so lavishly about them. Because there are rocks, shall there be no roses? Because there is dust, shall there be no dew?

Do you do well, my sisters, to make your houses so gloomy that your husbands would rather roost outside upon the stone fences, than stay in them? Don't *have* a "best carpet;" don't *have* a "best sofa." Let in the sun, and the birds, and the children, though it involve bare floors and wooden chairs, and the total banishment of General Washington and that best looking-glass. *Eat* in your "best parlor," and laugh in it; don't save it up to be laid out in! Try it now, and see if life isn't a different thing to you all. As to your "work," a great deal of it is unnecessary. John and the children would be much better without pies, cakes, and doughnuts. Make it your religion to give them wholesome bread and meat, and then stop and take a little breath. Nobody will thank you for turning yourself into a machine. When you drop in your tracks, they will just shovel the earth over you, and get Jerusha Ann Somebody to step into your shoes. They wont cry a bit. You never stopped to say a word to them except "*get out of my way*." To be sure, you were working hard for them all the while, but that wont be remembered. So you just take a little comfort yourself as you go along, and look after "No 1." Laugh more and darn less; they will like you twice as well. If there is more work than you can consistently do, *don't do it*. Sometimes there is a little blossom of a daughter in a family who makes everything bright with her finger-tips; if there is none in yours, do *you* be that blossom. Don't, even for John, let your children remember home as a charnel-house, and you as its female sexton.

WHY WEAR MOURNING?

WISH that a few sensible, intelligent, *wealthy* people would cease draping and festooning themselves like engine-houses, when a death occurs in the family. I use word "*wealthy*" advisedly; because it is only that class who can really effect a reformation, for the reason that *they* will not be supposed unable "to pay a proper respect," as the phrase runs, to the deceased. Proper respect! Do yards of crape and bombazine never express the opposite emotion? Is real heart-breaking grief to be gauged by the width of a hem, or the length or thickness of a veil? Have not many a widow and orphan woke up, the morning after a funeral, to find the little left by the deceased, expended in funereal carriages, for people who would not lift a helping finger if it would keep them out of the almshouse? We all know that, or if we don't, we may wake up to the fact, some future day, when the sunshine of prosperity is clouded over. That point disposed of, it must also be remembered that a black dress now is hardly "mourning;" since that color is so fashionable for street and home, and even festive wear, that it is hard to distinguish the lady who affects "all black," because "it is so stylish," from a bereaved person. Another objection to "mourning" is, that it is the most expensive dress that can be worn, because most easily spoiled by rain, or dampness, or dust; and as "proper respect for the deceased" requires such voluminous folds of it, and so often renewed to be presentable, or else many changes of mourning to keep the "best suit" up to the proper grief requirement, that the tax on a limited purse may be easily calculated.

Said a lady to me one day, "This heavy crape-vail, over my face and down to my knees, keeps out the air, and gives me a constant sick-headache."—"Why, then, wear it?" asked I.—"Because it wouldn't be *decent* to omit it," she replied. This remark, of course, requires no comment.

Then, again, the little children—death must be made as horrible as possible to *them* too, at the biding of custom! They must be swathed in sackcloth although only two or three years of sunshine have put the golden gleam in their hair. Is it not enough that papa or mamma, or sister or brother, may never answer again when their bird-like voices call them! Is it Christian or even humane, so to surround them with gloom that "death" shall be a never-ceasing nightmare? I never see a little creature so habited, that I do not long to hang a garland of roses about its neck, and point to the blue heavens as an emblem of that serene rest which has come to the sleeper.

But you may ask, "Would you give *no* sign, *no* token that the footprints of the Destroyer are over your threshold?" Yes, the same that is used by military men when their chief has departed—a crape upon the arm. This simple token—no more; since, as I say, multiplied bombazine and crape do *not* always express either grief or respect; since they often represent the contrary, and mostly an expense which can ill be borne

by the survivors even when grief is sincere; and since this already recognized military badge of bereavement answers all the purpose—why not?

The white ribbon tied upon the door-handle, with rosebuds attached, when the baby's lids are forever closed—oh! that is beautiful. There are, and must be, breaking hearts inside that door; but I know by experience that the moment will surely come, after nature shall have had its saving flow of tears, when, in the sense of perfect peace, and safety for the little song-bird, now far above the clouds of earth, they will forget themselves and remember only that.

Then away with all these heathenish insignia; they certainly stand no more for grief or respect than a flashing diamond on the neck or finger, denotes wealth or social position, or even respectability. Above all, away with this bugaboo nightmare of little children, who will have enough, God knows, to contend with, as they grow older, without prematurely draping with the blackness of darkness, the entrance to a portal through which they are certainly destined to pass, and which the light of faith in their maturer years may gild, as the shining gate to the Celestial City.

"DELIGHTFUL MEN."

SN'T he a delightful man? This question was addressed to me by a lady in company concerning a gentleman who had rendered himself during the evening, peculiarly agreeable. Before I answer that question, I said, I would like to see him at home. I would like to know if, when he jars his wife's feelings, he says, "Beg pardon" as willingly and promptly as when he stepped upon yonder lady's dress. I would like to know if, when he comes home at night, he has some pleasant little things to say, such as he has scattered about so lavishly since he entered this room this evening; and whether if the badly cooked dish, which he gallantly declared to the hostess at the table, "could not have been improved," would have found a similar verdict on his own table, and to his own wife. *That is the test.* I am sorry to say that some of the most agreeable society-men, who could, by no possibility, be guilty of a rudeness abroad, could never be suspected in their own homes of ever doing anything else. The man who will invariably meet other ladies with "How very well you are looking!" will often never, from one day to another, take notice of his own wife's appearance, or, if so, only to find fault. How bright that home would be to his wife with one half the courtesy and toleration he invariably shows to strangers. "Allow me to differ"—he blandly remarks to an opponent with whom he argues in company. "Pshaw! what do *you* know about it?" he says at his own fireside and to his wife. Children are "angels" when they belong to his neighbors; his own are sent out of the room whenever he enters it, or receive so little recognition that they are glad to leave. "Permit me," says the gallant male *vis-a-vis* in the omnibus or car, as he takes your fare; while *his* wife often hands up her own fare, even with her husband by her side. No wonder she is not "looking well" when she sees politeness is for every place but for home-consumption.

"Oh, how men miss it in disregarding these little matters," said a sad-eyed wife to me one day. And she said truly; for these little kindnesses are like a breath of fresh air from an open window in a stifled room; we lift our drooping heads and breathe again! "Little!" did I say! *Can* that be little which makes or mars the happiness of a human being? A man says a rough, rude word, or neglects the golden opportunity to say a kind one, and goes his selfish way and thinks it of no account. Then he marvels when he comes back,—in sublime forgetfulness of the past,—that the familiar eye does not brighten at his coming, or the familiar tongue voice a welcome. Then, on inquiry, if he is told of the rough word, he says: "O-o-h! *that's* it—is it? Now it isn't possible that you gave *that* a second thought? Why, *I* forgot all about it!" as if this last were really a palliation and a merit.

It would be ludicrous, this masculine obtuseness, were it not for the tragic consequences—were it not for the loving hearts that are chilled—the homes that are

darkened—the lives that are blighted—and the dew and promise of the morning that are so needlessly turned into sombre night.

"Little things!" There *are* no little things. "Little things," so called, are the hinges of the universe. They are happiness, or misery; they are poverty, or riches; they are prosperity or adversity; they are life, or death. Not a human being of us all, can afford to despise "the day of *small* things."

Yes, husbands, *be cheerful at home*. I daresay, sir, *your* Bible may belong to an expurgated edition; but this sentiment is in mine. I have unfortunately loaned it to a neighbor, so that I cannot at this minute point to the exact chapter, but that's neither here nor there.

In every "Guide for Wives" I find "cheerfulness" the first article set down in the creed; with no margin left for crying babies, or sleepless nights, or incompetent "help," or any of the small miseries which men wave off with their hands as "not worth minding, my dear!" So when the time comes for John's return from the shop or office, they begin the cheerful dodge, just as they are bid, by the *single* men and women, who usually write these "Guides for Wives." They hurry to wash the children's faces, or to have them washed, and stagger round, though they may not have had a breath of fresh air for a week, to make things "cheerful" for John. John's beef and vegetables and dessert are all right. He accepts them, and eats them. Then he lies down on the sofa to digest them, which he does silently—cow-fashion. The children, one by one, are sent to bed. Now, does it occur to John that he might try *his* hand at a little "cheerfulness"? Not a bit. He asks his wife, coolly, if there's anything in the evening paper.

She is so tired of the house and its cares, which have cobwebbed her all over till she is half smothered, soul and body, that this question seems the cruelest one that could be put, in her nervous condition. She *ought* to answer as he does, when she asks him what is in the *morning* paper, the while she is feeding Tommy—*his* Tommy as well as hers: "Read it, my dear; it is full of interest!"

Instead, she takes up the evening paper wearily; and though the tell-tale, exhausted tones of her voice as she reads, are sufficiently suggestive of her inability for reading aloud, yet he graciously listens well pleased, and goes to sleep just as she gets down to the advertisements, which is a good place!

Now that woman *ought* just then, quietly to put on her bonnet and shawl, and run into one of the neighbors', and stay till *she* has got a little "cheerfulness;" but the "Guide to Wives" insists that, instead, she sit down and look at her John, so that no unlucky noise may disturb his slumber; and half the wives do it too, and that's the way they make, and perpetuate, these very Johns.

The way men nurse up *their* frail bodies is curious to witness, in contrast with the little care they take of their wives. Now it never occurs to most wives that being "tired," is an excuse for not doing anything that, half dead, they are drummed up to do. Now there's just where I blame them. If they wait for their Johns to *see* it, or

to *say* it, they may wait till the millennium. There's no need of a fight about it either. *He* wants to lie there and be read to. Well—let him lie there; but don't you read to him, or talk to him either, when you feel that way. If he is so stupid or indifferent, as not to see that you can't begin another day of worry like that, without a reprieve of some kind, bid him a pleasant good-evening, and go to some pleasant neighbor's, as he would do, if he felt like it, for the same reason—as he *did* do the evening before, without consulting your preference or tiredness.

Now this may sound vixenish, but it is simply *justice*; and it is time women learned that, as mothers of families, it is just as much their duty to consult their physical needs, as it is for the fathers of families to consult theirs, and more too, since the nervous organization of women is more delicate, and the pettiness of their household cares more exhaustive and wearing, than a man's can possibly be; and this I will insist on, spite of Todd and Bushnell, and every clerical pussy-cat who ever mewed "Let us have peace!" Peace, reverend sirs, is of no sex. *We* like it too; but too dear a price may be paid even for "peace."

Now I know there are instances, for I have seen them, in which the husband is the only cheerful element in the house—when his step, his countenance, like the sunrise, irradiates and warms every nook and corner. But ah! how rare is this! I know too that cheerfulness is greatly a thing of temperament; but I also know, that it is just as much a man's duty to cultivate it by reading to his wife, and conversing with his wife, as it is hers to amuse and cheer him when the day's cares are over. And in this regard I must say that men, as a general thing, are disgustingly selfish. Absorbing, but never giving out—accepting, but seldom returning. It is for women to assert their right to fresh air, to relaxation, to relief from care, whenever the physical system breaks down, just as men always do; for the Johns seldom wake up to it till a coffin is ordered—and pocket-handkerchiefs are too late!

And, speaking of that, nothing is more comical to me, in my journeyings to and fro in the earth, than the blundering way in which most men legislate their domestic affairs. Mr. Jones, for instance, is attracted to a delicate, timid, nervous little lady, and moves heaven and earth, and upsets several families who have a special objection to her becoming Mrs. Jones, in order to bring about this desirable result. After an immense besieging outlay, he gets her. We will leave a margin for the honeymoon. Then commences life in earnest. The little wife stands aghast to find that her husband's whole aim, is to transform her into the direct opposite to that which he formerly admired. In short, that to retain his love and respect, she must make herself, by some process or other only known to herself, entirely over. For instance, she is so constituted that the sight of blood has always given her a deadly faintness, and she never was able to assist, in any emergency or accident, where physicial pain was involved. Now this is not an affectation with her—she *really can not* do it. Now Mr. Jones, with masculine acumen, immediately sets in motion a series of little tyrannies, to force what a lifetime could never bring about, no more than it could change his

wife's hair from jet to flaxen color. Does their child break a leg, or arm, he insists, although other aid is at hand, that she shall not only be present, but assist in the dressing and binding up of the same, by way of eradicating and overcoming what he calls a "folly." To this end he uses sarcasm, ridicule, threats, every thing which he thinks the "head of the family" is justified in using, to force this child-woman's nature, which once had such fragile attractions for him, into an up-hill course, in which it is impossible for it ever to go, with all the tyranny he can bring to bear upon it; and thus he keeps on trying,—year after year,—with an amount of persistence which should entitle him to a lunatic's cell, and which is gradually preparing his wife for one, through mortification and wounded affection.

Again—a man is attracted to a woman of marked individuality of character. He admires her decision and self-poise, her energy and self-reliance, and stamps them, with one hand on his heart, with the conjugal seal. Directly upon possession, that which seemed to him so admirable conflicts with his opinions, wounds his self-love, and even though gradually and properly expressed, seems to breathe defiance. Now *this* woman he, too, strives to *make over*. He disputes her positions and opinions with acidity, because they differ from his own, and therefore must be wrong. Perhaps he looks at her, and at them, more through the eyes of impertinent outsiders who have nothing to do with it, than through his own spectacles. Many a man will perpetrate a great injustice in his own household, rather than bear the slightest meddling imputation that he is not its master. So, year after year, this fruitless effort goes on, to transform a full-grown tree to a little sapling, capable of being bent in any and every direction, according to the moulder's capricious whim or fancy, with not the ghost of a result, so far as success is concerned.

I might cite many other instances to illustrate the absurd manner in which men persist in marring their own happiness; committing those flagrant injustices of which women either die, and make no sign, or break into what is called "*unwomanly*" rebellion, when their sense of justice is outraged, by the *love* which has proved weaker than *pride*.

It is pitiful to think how frequent are these life-mistakes, and more pitiful still to think, that women themselves are responsible in a great measure for them. Let parents see to it, especially let *mothers* see to it, that the little boy is to yield equally with his sisters in their games and plays. Let the maxim, "Give it to your *sister*," issue as often from your lips as "Give it to your *brother*." Let the father say as often to his son, "Prepare to become the excellent husband of some good woman," as the mother to her daughter, "Prepare to be the worthy wife of some good man." In other words, begin at the fireside. Remember that you are training that little boy to make or mar the happiness of some woman, according as you teach him self-government—justice—and the contrary. This is an idea which even abused wives seldom think of. It might be well for them, and some now happy girl, who may lose through that boy, heart and hope in the future, did they do so

CHOOSING PRESENTS.

HICH would you prefer," asked a friend of me,—"a pretty useless present, or an ugly useful one?" I had to stop and think before replying. I knew it was a trap sprung for my halting; so, woman-like, I dodged my weak side by saying, "There is no necessity, as I see, for either extreme."

One of our first biographers has remarked of me, that if he brings home an *ugly-looking* book, and lays it upon the table, I very soon transfer it to a less conspicuous locality. This may or may not be true; meantime I am not going to blink the fact that I adore pretty things. Butter tastes better to me from a dainty little dish. So do vegetables. Nor, to compass this, does one need the purse of Fortunatus. Pretty shapes in vases, pitchers, plates, and the like, have commended themselves to me, though not of silver. In fact, since the burglars relieved me of my silver while in the country last summer, I resolutely set my face against any further invitations to them in that shape. This is to certify that henceforth only plated ware, but very *pretty* plated ware, shall cross my threshold.

But, not to digress, what a "mess" people generally make of holiday presents! Some houses contain only silver soup-ladles, others a superabundance of butter-knives. Some babies, again, have silver cups enough so furnish all their descendants, be they more or less. The most harrowing present I know of is a "picture annual," all over gilt, with wide margins inside, and with common-sense at a discount. It is a type of a pretty mouth from whence issues only folly. Worsted cats and dogs come next, in the shape of mats, chair-covers, etc. Now a dozen of handkerchiefs or gloves, may be both pretty and sensible as a present. So is a flower-stand, without which, in my opinion, no parlor is furnished, how plentifully soever satin and gilt may abound. I am frivolous enough to like rings, brooches, ear-rings, and bracelets, of lovely, but above all, *odd* forms and designs, if worn at the proper time and place. But, dear! dear! I shouldn't make a good Quaker, for a bit of scarlet somewhere in my room, is quite necessary to my peace of mind. I look at that elaborate little bird-house for sparrows, fronting the Quaker meeting-house, and I think I see a symptom of the coming millennium for Quakers. I frankly own to exchanging a white syrup-pitcher the other day, in favor of a white one with a scarlet handle. I like these little touches of color to a degree, that, if Heaven depended on their absence, might possibly peril my chances of Paradise.

Now I am not apologizing for this—not a bit! I am only sorry for those of you who trudge along whether from choice or necessity—through life's dusty highway, without stopping to notice, or to cull, the flowers hidden in its hedge-rows, and place them as you go, in your hair, or in your bosom.

Pretty things are humanizing. I wish every work-room could have its flowers and its pictures. *My* God don't turn His back on either. Even in the dull old yard of a

tenement house, He sends up through the chinks tiny blades of grass and dandelion, and chickweed blossoms. And does not the pure white snow come sifting down over the garbage-heaps and ash-barrels before the door of poverty which man, less merciful, would doom to have all the year round before their disgusted vision?

Meantime, let us hope that "the minister's" holiday present may be a pair of boxing-gloves instead of a hymn-book, of which latter he has a surfeit. As to his wife—for goodness' sake, send her the same thing you would, were she the wife of a layman. And if you order her a cake, don't surmount it with a cross, of which ministers' wives have already too many in their parishioners. Give an editor a new subscriber and you can't miss it. Send a lawyer no bones to pick, unless—well covered with meat! And don't make a *pup* of your husband by giving him a velvet dressing-gown. And as to you, sir, don't pick out for *your* wife just what your friend Jenkins does for *his*; because, though men are all alike, and cigars are always acceptable to them, yet a man can never be certain whether his wife, on the receipt of a present from her husband, will box his ears, or fall to kissing him; and since Variety is the god of most men, I suppose this is all right.

It must be owned, that of all perplexing things on earth, the greatest is the perplexity of choosing a present. After you have considered, first your purse; then the multifarious demands upon it; then the age, desires, and taste of the recipient—comes the weary tramp in hot, crowded stores for the desired article; comes the known incivility of *most* women bent on shopping errands, to their fellow-women; of addressing the clerk, upon whom you, as first-comer, have a prior claim, or even drawing from your and his fingers the very article you have under distracted consideration. Of course I don't mean *you*, my dear; didn't I say *most* women? You will always find that I leave a door of escape open, before I insinuate that my sex are not all seraphs. Well—you make your purchase, and perspire in your furs, while "cash" performs his gymnastics through feminine feet and hoops, to get it *parcelled* and return your change. But, alas! this is only one present, and it has taken an entire morning to get it, and when you get home Aunt Jemima whispers confidentially "that she overheard John say that *he* had bought that very article for the same person for whom yours was intended;" and, what is worse, you can't transfer it, because there is no other member of the family for whom it would be suitable. You wonder if it wouldn't do to enclose so many dollars to each member of the family, and let them make their own selection. Sentiment would have to "go under," of course; but don't it when a recipient wonders "how much you paid for your gift"? Time was, when a present was acceptable, or on the contrary, according to the love which prompted it, and not according to the value of the gift. Now, young ladies expect diamonds, and pearls, and rubies, and quite turn up their pretty noses at a book, or a work-box, or a writing-desk. What with "golden weddings" and "silver weddings," and other bids for gold and silver in various shapes, what with the bugbear word "mean" in such connection, bankruptcy, or an inglorious exit, is the only alternative to many. I have

been some time coming to my moral, which is this: that the "present" system is, to use a slang expression, "run into the ground." I except the present a husband gives his wife, for whom nothing of course is too good, or too tasteful, or too costly; and who can, while receiving it, ask him to give her a hundred dollars or so, to go out and *buy him one*! Also, in all heartiness, and without joking, I except the little children, whose lovely dream of Santa Claus vanishes with the flossy, golden-tipped curls of babyhood. Pile up for them the dolls, and tops, and whistles, and wagons, and kaleidoscopes, and velocipedes, that they may always when old age seats them in the chimney-corner have this bright spot to look back upon, over the graves of buried hopes and hearts, which could not else bear thinking of.

A BID FOR AN EDITORSHIP.

THINK I should like to be an editor, if somebody would do all the disagreeable, hard work for me, and leave me only the fancy touches. I don't know how profound my political articles would be, but they would be *mine*. I think my book reviews would be pleasant reading, at least to everybody but some of the authors. I should have a high railing round my editorial desk, and "through the lattice" microscopically and leisurely regard the row of expectant men waiting outside for a hearing. I should not need a spittoon in my office. Nobody should contribute to my paper who smoked, or chewed, or snuffed tobacco; that would diminish my contributors' list about right. I should discard Webster and Walker, and inaugurate a dictionary of my own. I should allow anybody who felt inclined to send me samples of big strawberries and peaches, and bunches of flowers; and I should get a fine library, free gratis, out of the books sent me to review. As to grinding the axes of the givers in return, why that, of course, should always be left to the option of the editor. Before I commenced an editor's life, I should secure money enough in some way to be able to snap my fingers in the face of that grim ogre, "Stop my Paper!" I tell you I *wouldn't* stop it. It is a free country. I'd keep on sending it to him. I'd always have something in every number about him, so that he couldn't do without having it, how much soever he might want to.

Then you should see my desk. It should be dusted once a year, to show editors what a desk *might* be. My editorial chair shouldn't pivot; there should be no shadow of turning about that. Gibraltar should be a circumstance to it. The windows of my editorial den should be scraped with a sharp knife occasionally, to take off sufficient dirt to enable me to write legibly. I should keep my best bonnet in a bandbox under my desk, for any sudden dress emergency, as do editors their go-to-meetin' hat. Like them, too, I should have a small looking-glass for—visitors! also a bottle of—"medicine" for—visitors! I don't think I should need a safe, as the principles upon which my paper would be conducted would render it unnecessary. My object would be to amuse *myself*, and say just what came uppermost, not by any means to please or edify my species. Now, I have examined all the papers that cross my threshold, and I am very sure that I have hit on quite an original idea.

If it stormed badly on publication day, I wouldn't send the poor devils in my employ out with my paper, just because my subscribers fancied they wanted it. Let 'em wait. The first fair day they'd have it, of course. In the meantime, the printer's devil, and the compositors, and the rest of 'em, could play chequers till the sky cleared up.

If anybody sued me for libel, I'd—I'd whine out, "Aint you ashamed to annoy a female? Why don't you strike one of your own size?" I should insist on being treated with the deference due to a woman, though in all respects I should demand the

untrammeled-seven-leagued-boots-freedom of a man. My object would be to hit everybody smack between the eyes, when I felt like it; and when I saw brutal retribution coming, to throw my silk apron over my head and whimper.

I have not yet decided upon the title of my paper. Children are not generally baptized until after they are born. Nor do I know who will stand sponsor. All that is in the misty future. As to the price, I should nail up a cash-box at the foot of the stairs, and people could drop in whatever they liked. I should, by that means, not only show my unshaken confidence in human nature, but also learn in what estimation the general public held my services. There's nothing so dear to my heart as spontaneity.

A SERMON TO PLYMOUTH PULPIT.

MR. BEECHER! that you should recommend "candy," or "sugar plums," it is all the same, for the youngsters. That *you* should be quoted through the length and breadth of the land as having done so, to the delight of these youngsters, and the candy-merchants, and the dentists, and the doctors generally! To be *candid*, I am ashamed of you.

Do you suppose that you are the only grandparent in the land? The only loving, the only proud grandparent? I am a grandparent. I can love as hard as you can. I can show just as bewildering a grandchild as you can. It is just as hard for me to say No to that grandchild as it is for you to say No to yours; but—excuse me—*I* can do it. She is five years old, but never touches candy. When she was three, a lady in an omnibus gave her a red and white peppermint stick, and she turned to me and asked "if it were not a pretty *toy*?" She knows now that candy is to eat; but when it is given her, whether in my presence or not, she says, "I am not allowed to eat candy." Meantime, she loves beefsteak, she loves potatoes, she drinks milk and eats bread, with a relish that candy-fed children never know. Either you are very right, or I am very wrong. You see I am touchy on this subject, having worn out several pens and distributed much ink in the crusade against it; and here *you*, in the *Ledger*, right under my very nose, with one frisk of your magic pen, cover me with indelible ignominy!

"Mr. *Beecher* says children should have candy;" and, what is more, he thinks they should be *bought* to be good by it! Oh, fie!

Well, now, I reply: Mr. Beecher is a *man*. If his grandchild has the stomach-ache, it is the *women* of the family who will soothe it, and bear its cries and its wakeful nights. If the little teeth prematurely decay and ache, it is *the women* who will accompany it to the dentist's for the heart-rending wrench of cold iron. Mr. Beecher, in short, decided this candy question from a *man's* standpoint. He took the popular side of the question with the children, who will always shout hosanna to him for the same. But, my dear sir, the mothers who, going home after shopping through Broadway, stop each day for the poisonous parcel of sweets for Johnny and Susy, need restraint, not encouragement, from you. They "can't imagine what ails Susy or Johnny, to be so fretful" after eating it. Of course they never for a moment suppose it to be candy. Didn't *they* eat candy? And are they buried yet? *I* ask another question: What is the state of their teeth and digestion to-day? What their powers of endurance as mothers? What, in short, do they annually contribute to enable the fat family doctor to ride in his carriage and live in Fifth Avenue? *That's* what *I* want to know.

O Mr. Beecher! well as I like you, I don't know what to say to you; and what makes the case more aggravating, I know I shall keep on liking you, whatever you say. That's the worst of it, and you know it. And I am going to send this right off to

the *Ledger* office without a second reading, lest I should qualify it, or trim it up, or make it more respectful because you are "a minister."

No, sir; I won't do it; I'll take example by a rampant female at a public meeting the other night, who was scolding her husband for not getting her a better seat. The distressed man laid his hand on her arm, saying, "Hush! here's Fanny Fern; she will hear you." With distended nostrils, that admirable woman replied, "I don't care for six hundred Fanny Ferns!"

My dear sir, your hand is too well accustomed to drawing a moral, for me to presume to do it for you in this case! Adieu.

FEMALE CLERKS.

HAVE heard the objection made, by women, to female clerks in stores, that they are less civil and attentive to their own sex than are male clerks. I can only answer for myself, that I have never found any reason to complain of them in this regard. In fact, I often wonder at their patience and civility under very trying circumstances. I suppose gallantry supplies the place of patience in male clerks. With so many fresh, pretty, dimpled young faces to look at, a young man need not be so very churlish, though he be not christened Job.

Female clerks, it always seemed to me, must necessarily give out first *in their feet*. That incessant standing, from morning to night, must be more trying to them than to men. Many women, I know, can *walk* miles more easily than they could stand for half an hour.

After making a purchase at a store quite late in the afternoon, I said to the young girl who waited upon me,—

"How very tired you must get of us women, day after day!"

"There is a great difference in them," she civilly replied.

"But don't your feet ache sadly?" I asked. "That always seemed to me the most trying part of it."

She smiled as she pulled from under the seat, behind the counter, a stool.

"I thought that mitigation of weariness was against all regulations in stores," I replied.

"Not in *this*," was her answer. "Mr. —— has always allowed his female clerks to sit down when they were tired."

Now, I was so pleased at this that I should like to give that employer's name in full on this page. Here was a man who was wise enough, and, above all, humane enough, to look on *their* side of the question. In doing so, of course, he did not overlook his own. In doing so, he may also have known that there is a point when even a woman's india-rubber patience, may be stretched too far. He may have known that, when soul and body gave out, and a customer came in at that trying moment, and the "last ounce" having been "laid on the camel's back," the article inquired for *they* "*did not keep*!" I say he *might* have been keen enough to have known this. *I* prefer to believe, that being a good, kind-hearted man, he tried to make service for these young girls as light as he would wish it made for his own young daughters, were they in that position. It is very certain that, which way soever we look at it, it is an example which other employers would do well to follow.

It wont do the male clerks any harm to stand still; but I would be very glad to have inaugurated this humane consideration for the young women. I heard one of them tell a friend, the other day, that she had to go directly to bed each evening on her return home, because her feet and back ached so intolerably.

Another suggestion: When employers have any occasion to reprove these young women, if they would not mortify them by doing it in the presence and in the hearing of customers, it would not only be more pleasant for the latter, but would be more likely to have its proper effect on the offender. I have sometimes heard such brutal things said by employers to a blushing young girl, whose eyes filled with tears at her helplessness to avert it, or to reply to it, that I never could enter the store again, for fear of a repetition of the distressing scene, although, so far as I personally was concerned, I had nothing to complain of.

The moral of all this is, that men in the family, and in the store too, must look upon women in a different light from that to which they are accustomed; before, to use a detestable phrase, but one which will appeal most strongly to the majority, they "can get the most work out of them." Physicians understand this. Every man is not a physician, but he ought at least to know that backaches and headaches, and heartaches too, are not confined to his own sex.

BLUE MONDAY.

LUE Monday." By this name clergymen designate the day. Preaching as they do, two sermons on the Sabbath, sometimes three—not to mention Sunday-school exhortations, and possible funerals and marriages; of course, I take no account of what may have happened, on Sunday, in *their own* families, no more than does the outside world. "The minister" must, like a conductor of a railroad train, be "up to time,"—hence "Blue Monday." Flesh and blood is flesh and blood, although covered by a surplice or a cassock, and will get *tired*, even in a good cause. Therefore the worn-out clergyman takes Monday for a day of rest, for truly the Sabbath is none. He wanders about and tries to give his brains a holiday—I say *tries*, because he often misses it by wandering into the book-stores, or going to see a publisher, instead of taking a drive, or a ramble in the fields, or wooing nature, who never fails to lay a healing hand on her children.

But Blue Monday does not belong exclusively to clergymen—oh, mother of many children! as you can testify. True, you call it by another name—"Washing-day,"—but it is all one, as far as exhaustion is its characteristic. May the gods grant that on that day, when your assistant in nursery-labor must often make up the deficiencies involved in the terrible "family-wash," that no "plumber" or "gas-fitter" send in his bill, to "rile" the good man of the house, to exclaim against the "expenses of housekeeping," and send you into your Babel of a nursery, with moist eyes and a heavy heart? It is poor comfort, after you have cried it out, to try to pacify yourself by saying, Well, he didn't *mean* to say I'm sorry I ever was married, yet it hurts me all the same; men are so thoughtless about such things, and they go out after hurling such a poisoned arrow, and forget, even if they ever knew it, that they have left it there to rankle all day; and are quite astonished, and, perhaps, disgusted when they come back that the good lady is not in excellent spirits, as they are, and wonder what *she*, with a comfortable home, and nothing but house matters to attend to, can find to worry her. Now, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Jenkins, and Mrs. Smith, I'll lay a wager with each of you, that your husbands have done that very thing, more times than you can count, and on "Blue Monday" too.

Ah! these "chance words," and the *thick*-skinned utterers of them. Ah! the pity that the needle is no hindrance to the bitter thoughts they bring; but that over the little torn apron or frock, the tears of discouragement fall; the bitterest of all—that *he* hasn't the least idea "he has said anything," but is, very likely, inviting some fellow that very minute to "take a drink" with him, or to smoke a dozen cigars more or less, spite the "expense." My dears, wipe your eyes. If you look for consistency in the male creature, you'll need a microscope to find it. *Your* expenses hurt him dreadfully; when I say yours, I mean not only your *personal* expenses, but the *house* expenses; for don't you see, had he staid a bachelor, he wouldn't have had a plumber's bill to pay—and that's

all your fault, because you said "yes," when he got on his knees to implore you that he *might* have the felicity of paying your mutual plumber's bill.

But *that* was *then*, and *this* is *now*!

But isn't it perfectly delicious when those men come home, after making some such blundering speech, the innocent way, after hanging up their hats, that they'll walk into your presence, rubbing their hands, and fetch up standing in the middle of the room with, "Why! *what's* the matter?" as they catch sight of their wives' lugubrious faces. I tell you, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Jones, and Mr. Jenkins, whatsoever else you do, *don't* hold your *wives* responsible for that which they are no more to blame for than yourselves. Or if you will insist upon going over their hearts with a cart-wheel, in this manner, have the manliness when you come home, not to pooh-pooh the resentful tears you have caused.

The fact is, you are but blunderers as far as women are concerned. You are elephants trying with your huge paws to pat humming-birds. Nine out of every ten you demolish. Only physicians understand a woman; and they don't always act up to the light they have.

I would like to write a book on some kinds of legal murder; that is if really *good* people had not such moonshine notions about "delicacy." This class are really the drags on the wheel of reform. I don't say that sometimes it is not necessary, and even right, to drive rough-shod right over them, if they will persist in walking in such a narrow path; but one does it after all with regret, because they so sincerely believe themselves to be in the "path of duty," as they call it. Dear me! if there ever was a perverted phrase, this is one! It makes me sick to hear it.

What do I mean by "legal murders"? Well, if a woman is knocked on the head with a flat-iron by her husband and killed, or if arsenic is mixed with her food, or if a bullet is sent through her brain, the law takes cognizance of it. But what of the cruel words that just as surely kill, by constant repetition? What of the neglect? What of the diseased children of a pure, healthy mother? What of the ten or twelve, even healthy children, "who come," one after another, into the weary arms of a really good woman, who yet never knows the meaning of the word *rest* till the coffin-lid shuts her in from all earthly care and pain? Is the self-sacrifice and self-abnegation all to be on one side? Is the "weaker" always to be the stronger in this regard? I could write flaming words about "the inscrutable Providence which has seen fit to remove our dear sister in her youth from the bosom of her young family," as the funeral prayer phrases it.

Providence did nothing of the sort. Poor Providence! It is astonishing how busy people are making up bundles to lay on *His* shoulders! I imagine Providence meant that women, as well as men, should have a right to their own lives. That they, equally with men, should rest when they can go no further on the road without dying. That while the father sits down to smoke the tobacco which "Providence" always seems to furnish him with, although his family may not have bread to eat, his wife should not stagger to her feet, and try to shoulder again her family cares and expenses.

Sometimes—nay, often—in view of all this, I rejoice in regarding the serene Mrs. Calla-Lily. *She* goes on just like a man. When she is tired she lies down, and stays there till she is rested, and lets the domestic world wag. If she don't feel like talking, she reads. If the children are noisy, she sweetly and cunningly gets out of the way, on that convenient male pretext, "putting a letter in the post-office." She don't "smoke," but she has her little comforts all the same, and at the right time, although the heavens should fall, and little Tommy's shoes give out. She looks as sleek and smooth and fair as if she were *really* a lily; and everybody says, "What a delightful person she is! and how bright and charming at all times!"

Now this spectacle soothes me, after seeing the long procession of bent, hollow-eyed, broken-spirited women who are *legally* murdered.

I exclaim, Good! and think of the old rhyme:

"Look out for thyself,
And take care of thyself,
For nobody cares for thee."

Of course this is very "unamiable" in me, but amiability is not the only or the best quality in the world. I have seen people without a particle of it, as the phrase is often understood, who were the world's real saviours; and I have seen those human oysters, "amiable" people, till sea-sickness was not a circumstance to the condition of my mental and moral stomach.

What a millennial world this would be, if every one were placed in the niche for which he or she were best fitted. Now I know a capital architect who was spoiled, when he became a minister. A dreadful mess he makes of it working on the spiritual temple, as pastor of a country church; whose worshippers each insist upon shaping every brick and lath to their minds before he puts them together; and then they doubt if his cement will do. Poor man!—I know of a merchant, helplessly fastened to the yardstick, who should be an editor. I know of a lawyer, who has *peace* written all over him, and yet whose life is one interminable fight. I know scores of bright, intelligent women, alive to their finger-tips to everything progressive, good and noble, whose lives, hedged in by custom and conservatism, remind me of that suggestive picture in all our Broadway artist-windows, of the woman with dripping hair and raiment, clinging to the fragment of rock overhead, while the dark waters are surging round her feet. I know little sensitive plants of children, who are no more understood by those who are daily in their angel presence, than the Saviour was by his crucifiers. Children who, mentally, morally, and physically, are being tortured in their several Gethsemanes to the death; and I know sweet and beautiful homes, where plenty, and intelligence, and Christianity dwell, where no little child's laugh has ever been heard, and no baby smile shall ever fill it with blessed sunshine. I know coarse-natured men and women who curse the earth with their presence, whose thoughts and lives are wholly base and ignoble, and yet who fill high places; and I know heaven's own children—patient, toiling, hopeful—sowing seeds which coarse, hurrying feet trample

in the earth as they go, little heeding the harvest which shall come after their careless footsteps.

Life's discipline! That is all we can say of it.

How any one with eyes to see all this, can doubt Immortality, and yet bear their life from one day to another, I cannot tell. How persons can say, in view of all these cross-purposes, I am satisfied with *this* life, and—had I my way—would never leave it, is indeed, a mystery. It must be that the soul were left out of them.

But this doleful talk wont do—will it? I should not dispel illusions—should I? Now, that last is a question I can't settle: whether it were better, if you see a friend crossing a lovely meadow, rejoicing in the butterflies, and flowers, and lovely odors, to warn him that there is a ditch between him and the road, into which he will presently fall; or to let him enjoy himself while he can, and plump into it, without anticipatory fears? What do you think? Anyhow, it is no harm to *wish* you all a happy summer.

Would it not be well for those who report the "dress" of ladies at a public dinner to instruct themselves in advance as to *color*? One can always tell whether a man or a woman is the reporter, by the blunders of the former in mistaking blue for green, lilac for rose, and black for pink. The world moves on, to be sure, in either case; but since reporting must be done on such infinitesimal matters, it were better it were well done. A lady who studiously avoids flashy apparel does not care to read in the morning paper that "she appeared in a yellow gown trimmed with pink." Perhaps the avoidance of the "flowing bowl" by male reporters would conduce to greater correctness of millinery statement.

THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT.

DO not know who writes the editorials on the "Woman Question" in its various aspects, in our more prominent New York papers. I read them from day to day, with real disappointment at their immaturity, their flippancy, their total lack of manliness, and respect for, or appreciation of, true womanhood. I say this in no spirit of bitterness, but of real sorrow, that men stepping into the responsible position they hold on those papers, have not better considered the subjects of which they treat. That the writers are not known outside the office, seems to me a very unmanly reason for their misrepresentations. Every morning I ask, over my coffee, Have these men mothers, sisters, wives, who so persistently misrepresent the doings of self-respecting, self-supporting, intelligent women? Does *Congress* make no mistakes, that women should be expected, in their pioneering, to have arrived at absolute perfection? Is there no heat, in debate, on *its* floor; no uncourteousness of language? Did not one member, a short time since, call out there to have another member "spanked"? Does the speaker's mallet never call to order, men selected by their constituents, because supposed most intelligently to represent the various local and other interests of the country? Does the cut of a man's hair or coat injuriously or approbatively affect his speech upon the floors? Does anybody care what color it is, or how worn? I ask myself these questions when I read reports of "strong-minded women's meetings," as they are sneeringly termed, which consist mainly on the absence of a "long train" to their dresses, or the presence of it; on the straightness of their hair, or the frizzing of it; on the lack of ornamentation, or the redundance of it. This mocking, Mephistopheles-dodging of the real questions at issue, behind flimsy screens, seems to me not only most unworthy of these writers, but most unworthy of, and prejudicial to, the prominent journals in which they appear.

If they think that women make such grave mistakes,—mistakes prejudicial to the great interests they seek publicly to promote, the great wrongs they seek to right,—would it not be kinder and more manly, courteously to point them out, if so be that they themselves know "a more excellent way"? Among all these women, are there *none* who are intelligent, intellectual, earnest, *and modest withal*? Have the editors of these very papers in which these attacks appear, never gladly employed just such, to lend grace, wit, and spirit to their own columns, that they have only sneers and taunts for the cause they espouse, and never a brave, kind, sympathetic recognition of their philanthropic efforts? Is the cause so utterly Quixotic, espoused by such women, who make their own homes bright with good cheer, neatness, taste, and wholesome food, that they cannot gallantly extend a manly hand after it and help them *over* those bright thresholds, and out into a world full of pain and misery, to lift the burden from their less favored sisters?

If they have the misfortune not to know such women among "the strong-minded," would it not be well to seek them out, and better inform themselves on the subjects upon which they daily write?

The pioneer women who have bravely gone forward, and still keep "marching on," undaunted in the face of this unmanly and ungenerous dealing, have, doubtless, counted the cost, and will not be hindered by it. I do not fear that; but I *do* regret that any editor of a prominent paper in New York should belittle it and himself, by allowing any of his employés to keep up this boyish pop-gun firing into the air.

The other night, I attended a lecture, the proceeds of which were to be devoted to a charitable institution for women.

Now here was a man willing to do this for the particular women's charity to be benefited by it, but he couldn't do it without stepping out of his way to sneer at female suffrage and kindred movements which are advocated and engineered by pure, intelligent, cultivated, earnest women, or fixing his seal of approbation on this particular branch of philanthropy, as the only remedy for all the ills that come of an empty purse and a grieved heart.

And just here is the fly in all these philanthropic ointments. Mix your medicines in *my* shop, or they will turn out poisons. That is the spirit. Now I don't believe that one society, or one man or woman, is the pivot on which this universe turns; and wishing well, as I do every progressive, humanitarian movement, I deplore that its leaders will not keep this fact in mind. I don't say that I wish *women* would keep it in mind, for I am a diligent reader of newspapers, and I see men every day ignoring this broad foundation of civilization. I see them making mouths at each other over a political bone or religious fence; or I hear naughty names called, because one man grabbed a bit of news for his paper, and scampered off with it to the dear public, before his editorial neighbor got scent of it. Oh, women don't do all the gossip and slander and back-biting in the world. They don't make all the silly or stupid speeches either. Nor do they "rush into print," any oftener than certain unquiet male spirits, "thirsting for notoriety," as the phrase goes, who think they know when a colt is a horse, and *vice versa*, better than any other man, because they studied Greek at Oxford. Humbug is not always a female, but when humbug *is* a female, she generally hails from the top round of the ladder! I am happy to say that, though I may be putting a stone into the hands of mine adversary by the admission!

Human nature might be improved, even in the year 1869. How glad the pop-gun clergyman of a small parish is, when some clerical big-gun is supposed to make a false move on the sacerdotal chequer-board! How he rushes publicly to "deplore" that his "dear brother in Christ should lay himself open to the world's censure in this manner"! His "dear brother's" popularity and big salary were not the animus of *that* criticism—oh, no! Now I'm not one of those who believe that "a minister" is certainly a saint, above his fellows; or that Christianity is benefited by refusing to admit the shortcomings of church-members. I once heard Rev. Dr. Hall preach a

sermon on this subject, every word of which was pure gold and ought to be printed in pamphlet form and placed in the pews of all our churches.

"Mix your medicines in my shop, or they will be poisons"! How sick I am of it! There is so much elbow room in the world, why fight only for one corner? But men, set us "weak women" such a terrible example, fighting and squabbling about straws, and whining when they are defeated. Now, if instead of wasting their time this way, or idling it away as fashionable loungers,—I speak after the manner of the New York—to women,—if instead of belonging to useless up-town clubs, where with the heads of their canes in their mouths, they sit in the day-time, measuring passing female ankles, or drinking and talking male scandal, or betting;—if instead they would—each butterfly son of them—take some good, interesting book, and finding some tenement house, sit down of an evening and amuse some laboring man, who would else flee from the discomforts of such a place to the nearest grog-shop, how noble would this male butterfly of Fifth Avenue then appear! In fact, this particular form of benevolence commends itself to me as the only one that could rescue him from the butterfly existence of up-town clubs.

A thought strikes me! As the "New York ——" remarks, when advising women to teach sewing to poor girls, "but perhaps these female butterflies of Fifth Avenue don't know themselves how to sew." Alas! should these male butterflies of the Fifth Avenue club-houses not know how to read, when they get to the tenement house of their poor brother!

Now, to conclude, I see nothing antagonistic to a sewing-machine in a woman's vote, but the Editor of the New York —— is always throwing a blanket over a woman's head, for fear she will see a ballot-box. You may make soup, my dear, graciously says he, for poor women; or flannel shirts for very little paupers, if you'll promise not to burn your fingers in politics. That never'll do, my dear! It is *not* coarse for you to scramble at a matinee for seats, and elbow and jostle, and push men's hats awry—oh, no! that's legitimate—but to subject yourself to this kind of thing at the ballot-box, would be to forfeit man's love, and soil both your skirts and reputation.

WOMAN'S MILLENNIUM.

URRAH for Massachusetts! Read this:

"Chief Justice Bigelow, of Massachusetts, made short work with a divorce case which came before him at Springfield a day or two ago. It was an application of a wife for a divorce from her husband, on the ground of extreme cruelty. It coming up in testimony that the woman had been beaten and otherwise ill-used by her husband, the Judge at once decided the case in her favor, taking occasion to remark that in case of any violence by a husband to the wife, he should not hear all the points before deciding in favor of the latter. The woman might forgive cruelty toward herself, but the court would not."

Now *that's* what I call a righteous decision. Let all the wives with bruised shoulders, and arms, and backs, and eyes, (bruised *hearts* are too common to talk about!) emigrate forthwith to this enlightened State. Here's a man who is *just* to a woman. Think of the rarity of the thing! Compliments, and flattery, and gifts we can all have, till we get to be old women, and some of us afterwards; but *justice*, Messieurs! ah! that's quite another thing. Female eyes have grown dim looking for *that*, all through the ages. Men start up from their tobacco-torpor nowadays and ask, angrily, what means this present restlessness of American women? This wide and deep-spread discontent, which heaves to and fro, developing itself in a thousand different forms? *My* grandmother was contented enough. *My* aunt never looked beyond her own family. Are you quite sure of the first, and does the latter deserve praise or blame for the pin-measure view of the world to which she, the God-appointed instructor and guide of future men and women, chooses to limit herself? Has she a *right* to launch them on the turbulent ocean of life, with only one poor miserable broken oar to paddle their way? Such women are not praiseworthy; no more than they who, busying themselves in public affairs, leave their children to "come up" as chance or accident dictates. Are you quite sure, too, that because only lately this "wail of discontent" has reached your ear, that it has not been stifled under thousands of tombstones? Ah, well I remember when too young to know what life *meant for a woman*, hearing one who I have since learned had suffered and forgiven much, murmur to herself as she wearily laid her head upon her pillow, "God be thanked for sleep and forgetfulness!" and yet not one who saw her smiling face, or heard her cheerful voice, or was charmed with her intelligent conversation, ever dreamed that she was not "a contented wife," as the phrase runs.

And just in this connection I would quote a remark which, for its truth, should be inscribed on the *pipe* (for there he would oftenest meet it) of every man in the land.

"Only so far as a man is happily *married to himself* is he fit for married life, and family life in general. Unless he has 'cleared himself up,' as the Germans say, he

can at best but enter into ambiguous relations to another. When a man is discordant in himself, he makes all that he comes in contact with discordant."

Now, candidly I ask you, oughtn't that remark to be in the Holy Scriptures? Perhaps you ask if the same is not true of women? I am not such an idiot as to deny that, either; but what I marvel at is this—that it should be such a perfectly natural and eminently righteous thing for a *man* to halloo to high heaven that *his* mate is not to his mind, after he has compassed heaven and earth to get her, and such a crime for a woman to be "discontented and restless under similar circumstances".

Nevertheless, I think woman's millennium is to come out of all this unquiet and chaos. Here's a remark made at a royal-literary-fund-dinner in England,—as true as I live, in *England*, and in London at that,—and by Charles Kingsley at that,—in response to a toast:

"As for imaginative literature," he said, "if the world continued to go on as it was proceeding, *ladies* must be called upon to fulfil this duty. Where would they find among men such poets as Mrs. Rossetti, Mrs. Jean Ingelow, or Miss A. Procter? Or who could write such works of prose fiction as the authors of 'John Halifax' or 'Romola'? In former times *men* only dealt with literature, but the more delicate the weapon became, the more delicate were the hands which wielded it. If he could give any advice to young men how they might escape the trials and troubles that might beset their path in the literary profession—how escape Whitecross Street prison and the workhouse—it would be by marrying a literary lady, and setting himself down to the humble and chivalrous duty of reviewing his wife's books."

The picture of that sublime bit of majesty, a *British husband*, performing such a feat, is so impossible to contemplate, that I must stop, that my readers and myself may take breath.

I am inclined to believe that there are a great many kinds of women, both in England and America. This idea seems to be lost sight of, by the writers of both nations, who have lately undertaken to describe the feminine element, under such titles as "the Girl of the Period," or "The Woman of the Time;" presenting to our view monstrosities, which no doubt exist, but which are no more to be taken specimens of the whole, than is the Bearded Woman, or the Mammoth Fat Girl.

New York, for instance, is not wholly given over to the feminine devil. Angels walk our streets, discernible to eyes that *wish* to see. Noble, thoughtful, earnest women; sick of shams and pretence; striving each so far as in her lies, to abate both, and to diminish the amount of physical and moral suffering. Then, I never go into the country for a few weeks' summer holiday, that I do not find large-hearted, large-brained women, stowed away among the green hills, in little cottages, which are glorified inside and outside by their presence; women who, amid the press of house and garden work, find time for mental culture; whose little book-shelves hold well-read copies of our best authors. Women—sound physically, mentally, morally; women, whom the *Man of the Period*, who most surely exists, has never found. Now

and then, some man, fit to be her mate, in his rambles in the sweet summer time, is struck as I am by these gems hidden amid the green hills, and appropriates them for his own. But for the most part, the more sensible a man is, the bigger the fool he marries. This is especially true of biographers! What a wrong, then, to the great army of sensible, earnest women in either country to pick out a butterfly as the national type. Because a few men in New York and London and Paris wear corsets, and dye their whiskers and hair, and pad out their hollow cheeks and shrunken calves, it does not follow that Victor Hugo, and John Bright, and the great army of brave men who won our late victory, are all popinjays. For every female fool I will find you a male mate. So when the inventory of the former is taken, the roll-call of the latter might as well be voiced. Are women so "fond of gossip"? Pray, what is the staple of after-dinner conversation when the wine comes on and the women go off? Do women "lavish money on personal adornment"? How many men are there who would be willing to tell on what, and on whom, their money was worse than lavished? Do women "leave their nursery altogether to hirelings"? How many corresponding men are there, whose own children under their own roofs, are almost entire strangers to their club-frequenting fathers? And yet what good, noble men are to be seen for the looking? Faithful to their trusts, faithful to themselves, unmoved by the waves of folly and sin that dash around them, as is the rock of Gibraltar.

I claim that justice be done by these writers on both sides of the water, to both sexes. Fools, like the poor, we shall have always with us; but, thank God, the "just" man and the "just" woman "still live" to redeem the race. Men worthy to be fathers, and large-brained women, who do not even in this degenerate day, disdain to look well after their own households.

It is but seldom that a child needs the rod, especially if taken from the time it is able to understand language, and firmly yet kindly treated, and given to know that No and Yes *mean* No and Yes, without any shadow of turning. It is a question, too, whether those who have unfortunately *come up*, instead of being judiciously *brought up*, are ever made better by harshness, under the name of discipline.

ENGLISH NOTIONS ABOUT WOMEN.

UR neighbors over the water, judging from an article in one of their leading papers, seem to be greatly exercised at present on "The Woman Question." The old model Englishwoman who sneezed exactly at the same hour her great grandmother did, and sat down, and rose up, and went out, and came in whenever her husband bade her,—and made no objection, at the same time, to any irregularity either in his hours or habits,—it seems, has disappeared. Instead, we have that horror,—the English female-physician; the English female would-be voter; in short, the English female who asserts her right to individuality, in action and opinion, equally with her husband.

John Bull sets down his mug of beer, and says that the thing is monstrous. He says that he no longer can lounge off by himself, as in bachelor days, although he is a married—and, therefore, a more important—member of society. He says that he is not allowed, as formerly, to spend every evening with his bachelor cronies,—Tom, Dick, and Harry. He says that his wife positively expects him to act as if he were married. He says that, when he tells her decidedly that he wont do this, that she pays no more attention to this refusal than as if he hadn't made it; but quietly returns to the same point of disputation the next day, and every day, and every month, and all through the year, with a terrible and feline pertinacity. He says that it is like the slow dropping of water on some sensitive part of the frame; he says he don't like it, and don't know what to do about it. He says, besides, that marriage is not at all favorable to largeness of mind, or breadth of view, which is very obvious, in his own case, in the remarks above quoted! He says that all she says and does "has the stamp of Lilliput;" and that should she even have the right of suffrage, she would barter away her vote for a new gown. He says justice is a quality unknown to woman; which is very true, and I want him to understand that is just what she is contending for. He says, to make a long matter short, that when he married he expected to live just exactly the same life that he did before, and that he finds he can't; and, moreover, he says, with a sweeping wave of his John Bull hand, that no husband was ever made more large-hearted, or tolerant, or in any way benefited by marriage.

Now if a man will marry, with such absurd ideas of what marriage ought to be, and if he will marry a *fool*, I advise him not to go whining round the world about it: he deserves the consequences. But let him not insist that *all* women are fools, because he got on his knees to obtain one. I will always maintain that there are twenty bad husbands to one bad wife; and that, that one would seldom continue bad if her husband were just and kind to her. As to marriage "narrowing a man's mind," that which never had any breadth cannot be narrowed. And history abundantly shows how wise in counsel, how judicious in influence, how helpful in sympathy and co-operation have been many such wives.

Now it is often said that a wife, to a literary man, is only a hindrance. Provided she is not a fool, it would pay him, in my opinion, to give her a regular salary, if he could not obtain it otherwise, to give him the *feminine side* of every great question of the day, as it comes up—which by the way, she does unconsciously, and which has anything but a "narrowing" effect either on his mind or his writings, whether he acknowledges it or not.

It is no small thing to be able to toss her a book and say, "I want to know what is in that book, but I haven't time to read it; run it over, will you, and tell me what you think of it?"—or to get from her the condensation of newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets, in the same way; or translations; or to have her assistance in answering letters, without prompting, when pressed for time; to ask her where such and such a passage may be found in certain authors, which have escaped *his* memory. Is contact with such a woman narrowing?

It is horrible for a man of sense to be yoked to a fool, and *vice versa*. No one denies it. But the whole kernel of the woman matter is just this: Men no longer are what they were. There *are* no *young* men now. Before they have ceased to be young men, the majority of them, by a total disregard of Nature's laws, have unfitted themselves for contact with, and companionship and appreciation of, pure, *good* women. It is as if a baby should be fed from birth with highly-spiced condiments; and then, at maturity, be expected to have a relish for pure, wholesome food. The fault is *not* in women, but in the men, who bring to the healthful, simple, sweet pleasures of matrimony, diseased minds and dilapidated bodies.

It is perfectly amazing the quantity of insulting advice volunteered in this day to women. Now here is an extract, I am happy to say, in this instance, from an English journal; the land, *par excellence*, of wife-beating, and kindred abominations in "high" and "low" life, in which the wife is advised if she would "wind her husband around her finger,"—though why that amusement is particularly desirable I fail to see,—if she would do this, "she must carefully study the cookery-book; so that his meals need not be monotonous." How many of his children she must attend to, during this interesting perusal, and while perfecting the results of such study, our writer does not state; nor does he throw any light upon the question—whether, when this delicate animal is gorged like the anaconda, he will, as does the anaconda, go immediately into a state of stupor, and be comparatively harmless until other re-enforcements are needed.

Also he tells the wife that "opposition and contradiction always make him furious; then he stamps and roars and becomes dangerous: she must by all means avoid that." It is so strange, this Solomon says, "that when a wife *knows* that a certain line of conduct is sure to produce this effect, she will do it, though victory is easy provided"—well, in short, provided she allows him to stamp and roar and become dangerous, like his son Tommy, when he can't have another stick of candy, and whom he himself would severely punish, for imitating his gentlemanly papa.

Are there no lines of conduct a husband persistently pursues towards his wife, though he "knows they are sure to wound and give offence?" And would he think "stamping and roaring and being dangerous" any excuse for a dislike of it? Is the man who sends his dear little child for that which will intoxicate him, or takes that child to bar-rooms and drinking-places to obtain it, never to be remonstrated with by the mother, lest he should be "angry"? Is the man who allows his relatives constantly to interfere with and slander his wife, who never write him letters without containing sly insinuations, intended—howsoever they may fail—to disturb conjugal and family harmony; who institute a court of inquiry into family expenses, probable journeys, &c., location of residence, and insist upon all these things being settled according to *their* means and standard, is this husband never to be told that such interference is insufferable, "because he will be angry"?

Is there a husband living who would permit a wife's father or brother to insist on managing his business affairs in such a clandestine, down-cellar, surreptitious manner through the wife? If he preferred going to spend the summer at one place rather than another, how would he like that matter settled by a conclave of his wife's relatives, and determined by *their* probable locality? I do not say that the latter, too, has not happened. In either case, it is a monstrous impertinence, and to be resented. I might multiply other instances of abuse to women, but these will suffice.

Let men, above all, ask themselves with regard to women—to wives—this question—and answer it in a manly, honest manner, whether it is condemnatory of their own "line of conduct" or the contrary: Should I be willing to endure what I expect my wife to bear, were I a woman and a wife? If not—is it just, or right, or manly, then, for me to expect it of her?

It is needless to say that this is the last question asked; and this is the root of all the evil. This making by men a broad easy road of license for themselves, while women are clogged, fettered, penned in, worried, harassed and unjustly treated, till even they—"become dangerous." And though the author above quoted seems to entertain no such possibility, our lunatic asylums and tomb-stones, if they stated the actual causes of insanity and death, might convince the most skeptical.

There is a kind of sentimental preaching to which an audience is sometimes treated, which is very repulsive to the hearty, sincere worshipper. Preaching which is full of poetical quotations; preaching where some of the words are clipped of their syllables, and others *chewed*, so to speak, indefinitely. Egotistical, drawling preaching, under which people go to sleep, or smile derisively, according to their humor; but from which none come away with the good seed which will spring up and bear fruit a hundred-fold. Essay preaching—walking gingerly round duty, and flattering self-love; milk-and-water preaching—colorless, flavorless, and thin.

RAG-TAG AND BOB-TAIL FASHIONS.

HEN I say that the street-dress of the majority of *respectable* women of New York today is disgusting, I but feebly express my emotions. I say the *respectable* women, and yet, save to those who know them to be such, their appearance leaves a wide margin for doubt. The clown at a circus wears not a more stunning or parti-colored costume; in fact, his has the advantage of being sufficiently "taut,"—to use a nautical phrase,—not to interfere with locomotion; while theirs—what with disgusting humps upon their backs, and big rosettes upon their sides and shoulders, and loops, and folds, and buttons, and tassels, and clasps, and bows upon their skirts, and striped satin petticoats, all too short to hide often clumsy ankles,—and more colors and shades of colors heaped upon one poor little fashion-ridden body than ever were gathered in one rainbow—and all this worn without regard to temperature, or time, or place—I say this presents a spectacle which is too disheartening even to be comical.

One cannot smile at the young girls who are, one day—Heaven help them!—to be wives and mothers. *Wives and mothers!* I say to myself, as I see the throat and neck with only the protection of a gold locket between itself and the cold autumnal winds. Wives and mothers! I say, as I see them ruining their feet and throwing their ankles out of shape, in the vain endeavor to walk on heels like corks, fastened far into the middle of the soles of their boots; and those boots so high upon the calf of the leg, and so tightly buttoned across it, that circulation is stopped, and violent headaches follow. Wives and mothers! I say, as I see the heating and burdensome panier tackled on the most delicate portion of a woman's frame, to make still surer confirmed invalidism. What fathers, husbands, brothers, lovers can be thinking about, to be willing that the women they respect and love, should appear in public, looking like women whom they despise, is a marvel to me. Why they do not *say* this to them, and *shame* them into a decent appearance—if their glasses cannot effect it—I do not know. Oh, the relief it is to meet a *lady*, instead of a ballet-girl! Oh, the relief it is to see a healthy, firm-stepping, rosy, broad-chested, bright-eyed woman, clad simply and free from bunches and tags! I turn to look at such an one with true respect, that she has the good sense and courage and *good taste* to appear on the street in a dress befitting the street; leaving to those poor wretched women whose business it is to advertise their persons, a free field without competition. If I seem to speak harshly, it is because I feel earnestly on this subject. I *had* hoped that the women of 1868 would have been worthy of the day in which they live. I had hoped that *all* their time would not have been spent in keeping up with the chameleon changes of fashions too ugly, too absurd for toleration. It is because I want them to *be* something, to *do* something higher and nobler than a peacock might aim at, that I turn heart-sick away from these infinitesimal fripperies that narrow the soul and purse, and leave nothing in their wake

but emptiness. Nor is it necessary, in avoiding all this, that a woman should look "strong-minded," as the bugbear-phrase goes. It is not necessary she should dress like her grandmother, in order to look like a decent woman. It is not necessary she should forswear ornamentation, because it were better and more respectable to have it confined to festal and home occasions and less to the public promenade. She is not driven to the alternative of muffling herself like an omnibus driver in January, or catching consumption with her throat protected only by a gold locket!

Oh, how I wish that a bevy of young, handsome girls, of good social position, would inaugurate a plain lady-like costume for street and *church* wear. I say young and handsome, because if an old woman does this, the little chits toss their heads and say, "Oh! she has had *her* day, and don't care now—and we want ours."

Now that's perfectly natural, and right too, that you should have your youth; that you should, as girls say, "make the most of yourselves;" but in doing so don't you think it would be well not to *lessen* or cheapen yourselves? and I submit, with all deference to your dress-makers and mammas, that every one of you who appear in public in the manner I have described, are doing this very thing—are defiling womanhood, and are bringing it into derision and contempt, whether you believe it or not.

Blessed be sleep! We are all young then; we are all happy. *Then* our dead are living. Then, the flowers bloom, though the snow may at that moment be beating against our windows. Then, the ships that have been wrecked are gaily sailing on the seas. Then houses are built and furnished, and, above all, bills are paid. Then, editors have full subscription lists and clergymen big salaries, and scribblers plenty of ideas. Then, ladies have "something to wear," although they may not have it on. Then, Sammy has his coveted velocipede, and Susy her big doll, and Frank his boat, and Fanny a lover, and Grandpa has no rheumatism, and Grandma has *not* lost her spectacles. Blessed be sleep!

SOME HINTS TO EDITORS.

HAT a pity when editors review a woman's book, that they so often fall into the error of reviewing the *woman* instead. For instance, "she is young and attractive, and will probably before long find her legitimate sphere in matrimony; or she is an old maid—what can she know of life except through a distorted medium? Let her wait, if so she be able, till some man is deluded into inviting her to change her name. That appears to be her present need. Or she has the affectation of writing over a *nom de plume*—and must, perforce, be a fool. Or she *did* write a preface to her book; or she *omitted* writing a preface to her book, as one might expect of a woman. Or we hear she is a widow; and notoriety is probably her object in writing."

I introduced this article by saying what a pity that editors in reviewing a woman's book should so often only review the woman. Perhaps I should have said, what a pity all editors are not *gentlemen*. It is very easy to determine this question, if one keeps the general run of editorial articles. Not that it does not sometimes happen that, in the editor's necessary absence, some substitute may get him into "hot water;" or, as a foreigner who once tried to use this expression, called it "*dirty water*,"—but taking the general tone of editorial articles, from one day or one week to another, the want of courtesy and self-respect, or the lack of it, are patent to the intelligent reader.

It is a pity that an editor should not be a gentleman, *for his own sake*, and because no position can be more honorable than his, if he choose to make it so, nor more influential for good or evil. Think of the multitude he addresses—the thinking men and women who pass his columns under critical review. Surely, this is a career not to be lightly esteemed, not to be slurred over bunglingly. Surely, this messenger crossing the sacred threshold of home, might well step carefully, reverentially, discreetly, and discuss fairly, justly, all topics especially connected with home duties and home responsibilities. Surely, his advertising list, if he have one, should be a *clean* one, such as any frank-browed, hitherto innocent young boy, might read. Surely, the maiden, whose horizon is not bounded by a strip of ribbon or silk, or even the marriage altar; should have the great questions of the day, relating to the future of her sex, not brushed aside with a contemptuous sniff, or treated with flippant ridicule, because this is the shortest and easiest way of disposing of that which requires thought and fair deliberation.

It seems so strange to me, who hold in such exalted estimation an editor's calling, that one should ever be found willing to belittle it; it is also a great comfort to know that there are those who hold this their position, for honor and interest second to none, and in this light conscientiously conduct their paper, so far as their strength and means allow.

This would be a very stupid world, I grant, if individuality were not allowed in the editorial chair as well as elsewhere; but leaving a wide margin for this, is there not

still room in many newspapers for more justice, manliness, courtesy, and, above all, respectful mention of woman, even though the exigencies of her life may compel her to address the public.

There is a practice of certain penny-a-liners which cannot be too severely reprehended. We do not refer to their personal descriptions of public persons, male and female, which are often wholly false—they having mistaken some one else for the individual they wished to describe; and if certain of the identity, generally "doing" the description in the worst possible taste. All this is bad enough; but we refer now to cases where a forgery or a murder is committed. Not contented with working up these cases in all their harrowing and often disgusting details, your barren penny-a-liner, catching at the least straw of an idea to secure another penny for another line, states that the criminal in question is son of the Hon. Samuel So-and-so, nephew of Mr. So-and-so, a gentlemen well known in the fashionable world, and brother of the beautiful Miss Smith who was so much admired in society last winter. Now, to say that a man who would recklessly carry distress to innocent persons, already sufficiently crushed by their calamity, should be horse-whipped, is a mild way of putting it. No dictionary could do such cold-blooded atrocity justice. Of course such items help sell a paper; but, alas, how low must be that editor's standard of journalism who permits his employés to pander to so corrupt and ghoul-like a taste! I think, could he sometimes look in upon the sorrowing family circle, which he has assisted to drag into this kennel publicity, or if he could suffer in his own family that which he so remorselessly deals out to another, he might realize the deadly nature of these poisoned arrows which he aims at his neighbor's heart.

Again, because the victims so assailed have not the prefix of "Hon." to their names, and have no "fashionable and beautiful sister," or "prominent and wealthy uncle," shall we therefore excuse this cowardly attack upon their poor hearths and homes? Let any one run over certain police reports of the day, if he would see how misery and misfortune are treated as a jest, by these small, brainless wits hard up for a subject. One's blood boils, that the human being exists who could regard such things from the standpoint of a circus clown. In fact, a circus clown is respectable in comparison, since his jests are legitimate and harmless.

These gentry never did me any personal harm.

True, black hair has often been awarded me, instead of light, by these scribblers, "who were on very intimate terms with me," and I have measured six feet in height, instead of four and a half; and I have "a stylish carriage and footmen," which I fervently wish the international copyright law would drive up to my door, bating the usual vulgar livery; also, half the things which they have asserted I "waste my earnings upon" would be agreeable to possess, and of course I grieve to take them down a single peg on all these statements; but lying did not die with the serpent in Eden, for his slimy trail is all through newspaperdom, save and except the —— now don't you wish you knew?

No humane or decent person, can read the police reports in some of the papers in New York, without feeling unutterable loathing and contempt for the writers. Is it not enough that these poor wretches, in their downward course, have lost almost the faintest impress of immortality, that one who at least bears the semblance of manhood, can stand over them and manufacture coarse jibes by the yard, to be perused by young people at the family hearth-stone? It is a disgrace to our civilization, and to the paper in whose columns they appear.

How would these writers like it, if the sister who once shared their cradle—having, in some mad moment, thrown away all in life that is pure and sweet to women—should she be brought up among that wretched crowd for sentence, how would he like it, to have her spoken of in this manner?—

"Miss Josephine Jones, a frail sister, with a bruised nose that once had been prettier, and a bonnet that did *not* originate in Paris, was charged with getting drunk, and tearing the hair from Miss Alice Carr's red head. The hair was produced in court, but for some inexplicable reason the clerk of the court seemed disinclined to touch it. Miss Josephine was found guilty, and gathering up the remnant of a greasy silk gown in her fair hand, she walked gracefully forth, to be provided with lodgings and grub, free of expense, on Blackwell's Island, where so many of her sex rusticate for the pleasant winter months."

Or, suppose he had a young brother, who had recklessly thrown off home influences, and, before reaching maturity, was brought into court as a common drunkard, how would he relish, having him spoken of in this manner?—

"An infant of twenty-one, named Harry Dexter, with blear eyes, and torn hat slouched over his swollen mug, was next called up. His boots and the blacking-brush seemed not to have had a very intimate acquaintance of late, and the laundress had evidently, for some cause or other, neglected his linen. His youthful hands also would have been improved by a dexterous use of soap and water. Young Harry had no occasion to inquire the way to his future boarding house, having often ridden down on previous occasions in that accommodating omnibus called the Black Maria, to take a sail at the city's expense to Pauper's Island."

We might multiply instances of this heartless and disgusting way of speaking of the faults and vices of our fellow-creatures, but this specimen will suffice to show the spirit in which they are penned. Nor is it any excuse, that many of the friends of these wretched beings can neither read or write, nor by any possibility ever be wounded by these so-called *jocular* allusions. I insist that the effect on the young people of our community is demoralizing. God knows that in the crowded city, with its whirling life, we have hard work enough to avoid jostling aside the urgent claims of the erring and unfortunate around us, without such help as this from the devil. It is bad enough "to pass by on the other side" when Christian charity challenges pity and help; but what must that man be made of, who would stand over a crushed fellow-being, and, for a few dollars, make merry with his misery? Surely, it seems to me, that the editors

of the papers where these disgraceful items appear, cannot be aware how disgusting they have become, to those who would else gladly welcome their daily issues in the family.

Burlesquing a drunkard! Why not burlesque a funeral? with the coffin and the mourners, with their sobs and tears and grieving hearts? Do those who get up such a painful exhibition ever think that there may be amid their audience some persons who have had, day after day, their lives saddened and imbittered by the dreadful reality? Is it a legitimate theme for mirth or ridicule? We think not.

HELP FOR THE HELPFUL.

HAVE never, in any temperance discussion, written or spoken, heard or seen any mention of this class of inebriates; and yet the drunkards on tea are just as surely sapping the foundations of life, as the devourers of whiskey or gin. That women only, or mostly, are the victims, does not lessen the importance of my statement. I say mostly, for I have in my recollection at least two literary men of note, who primed themselves on strong green tea, without sugar or milk, for any literary effort, when overtasked nature flagged. One of them became in consequence subject to distressing fits, and has since deceased.

But it is the women who practise this form of inebriation of whom I would now speak. The working-girls, the sempstresses, the tenders in shops, who, being able to pay but slender price for board, get badly-cooked, poor food, and, in consequence, often three times a day, call for the fatal "cup of tea," which, for the moment, "sets them up," as they call it, and enables them to shoulder again the load they have dropped, till another fit of exhaustion overtakes them, worse than the preceding, to be followed by a repetition of the same *pro-tem.* remedy. Then follow indigestion, headaches, sleepless nights, and the usual long train of miseries, which any physician who has ever been called upon to prescribe for these overworked, underfed unfortunates, will immediately endorse. Tea to the working-girl, taken in this way, is like the "corner-grocery-drink" to the working-man, and just as deadly in its results as if it sent her reeling through the streets, as rum does him; although she neither sees, knows, nor would admit it, any more than he would. Sometimes, when you speak to them about it, they reply, "But I must have something to keep me up; I have no appetite for food; I am so tired all the time, and tea makes me feel so good."

The old plea of the drunkard the world over. Look at these weary women, with dark circles about their eyes, nervous almost to insanity, ready to "cry" at the slightest notice, the blue veins on their temples looking as if they were painted *outside* the skin. Look at their long, thin, *sick*-looking fingers, and their slow, weary steps, from which all the spring and elasticity of youth has long since departed. See them swallowing "pills" by the dozen, and trying every quack medicine afloat, instead of resisting the enemy which has done all or two-thirds the mischief.

Of course, the world over, *bad food* is the sworn ally of drunkenness in every shape, and these poor girls have much to contend against in that shape.

Then, again, I think few women can long preserve their self-respect amid dirty surroundings. One often sees with a pained pleasure—if this expression is not paradoxical—their faint attempts to make light out of darkness, and beauty out of deformity, in the solitary plant, struggling for life, and its one slant ray of sunshine, outside some tenement-house window. Or, if you enter, a rude print upon the soiled wall, of some saint, or child, or some scene in nature; upon which latter the weary

eyes often turn with a vain longing at realization. These sights, to the humanitarian, who is trying to solve life's great problem for the benefit of those on whom it bears so heavily, are suggestive. It is clear, at least, that woman, from choice, would not be amid dirt or noisome odors. What *man* would become, without her refining influence, and the touch of her reformatory fingers, and her unpolluted sense of smell, of which tobacco has deprived him, it is not my purpose now to consider, although I have very firmly rooted ideas on this subject. But there is a class of women among those whom adverse circumstances have thrown into such places, upon whom it bears the more hardly, because they have been accustomed all their life to the reverse of this.

Hundreds so situated, sunk out of sight of former acquaintances by cruel want, bear it bravely, heroically, while struggling hopefully and one-handed, against discouraging odds, for better days. Some, alas! go *down*, soul-sick, body-weary, under the unequal contest, as we who live in this great, swarming city know. Benevolent ladies in New York are awake to this; and the question arising, What can we do for such? has been answered, by energetic and Christian ladies, by the establishment of boarding-houses, in respectable and pleasant neighborhoods; with board at prices but little higher than those which they were obliged to pay in the disagreeable localities above mentioned. Indeed, in some urgent and genuine cases, upon application, the applicant has been received upon merely nominal board, in recognition of the Bible fact that "bricks cannot be made without straw." In one such institution, I lately spent a most profitable and delightful morning. It is located on Washington square—one of the most delightful as well as central spots in New York City—by ladies of wealth and position in society, and, better still, ladies of intelligence and piety,—executive ladies, who do something beside *talk*, and know how, and when, and where to act for this great and humane object.

With such a good and solid foundation, they have moved on, as their strength and means have permitted. I passed from one to another of the pleasant rooms of the young ladies, who occupied apartments here, and who were, at that hour in the forenoon, scattered far and wide over the city; some as teachers in schools and in families, some as pupils in the School of Design, or the ward schools, while many were occupied as dress-makers, sempstresses, copyists, &c. I looked around me at the clean white little beds, at the books, at the prints upon the walls, at the climbing ivy and flowering plants, upon which the sun was shining as if in blessing, at the innumerable little tokens of personality, which are so suggestive to the stranger on entering an unoccupied apartment; those *little* things which say to you as you read the title of a genuine and well-thumbed book, "Ah! here lives one who *thinks*;" or you see by the thousand little refined touches, and orderly and wise arrangement of clothing and furniture, the neat thrift of woman expressed, and you feel thankful that they will not come home, when the day's toil is over, to unholy sounds, and unclean sights, and bad air, and loathsome food. You thank God that such women can keep up heart for their exhaustive and unaccustomed toil, by the *certainty* of a safe and respectable

shelter over their heads, when night draws its curtain over the temptations and the wickedness of this great city. You are thankful that their self-respect is not only preserved in this most important way, but by intercourse and contact with the ladies of worth and refinement who have the institution in charge and at heart.

If this is not a noble institution, what is? I do not call it a charity. It were wrong so to designate it. From out that threshold pass noble, *self-supporting* girls, putting to shame the useless lives of the idle, paniered ladies who remorselessly wear out the souls of husbands, fathers, and brothers, in the vain struggle for fashionable supremacy. No: this Institution is a *help*, not a *charity*. Its object is to help those who wish to help themselves.

Upon one of the walls of a little room there I saw a representation of the "Grecian Bend." I looked on this picture, and on that, and my eyes were moist with gratitude for one, and with womanly shame for the other.

Do you ever think how much work a little child does in a day? How, from sunrise to sunset, the dear little feet patter round—to us—so aimlessly. Climbing up here, kneeling down there, running to another place, but never still. Twisting and turning, rolling and reaching and doubling, as if testing every bone and muscle for their future uses. It is very curious to watch it. One who does so may well understand the deep breathing of the rosy little sleeper, as, with one arm tossed over its curly head, it prepares for the next day's gymnastics. A busy creature is a little child.

WOMEN ON THE PLATFORM.

ISS MARIANNA THOMPSON, now a student at the Theological school, received, during her summer vacation two invitations to settle with good societies, each of which offered her twelve hundred dollars per year. Pretty good for a school-girl, I think."

Yes, that is very good; and we trust Miss Thompson will accept one of these (or a better) and do great good to her hearers. And, should some excellent young man ask her to "settle" with him as wife, *at no salary at all*, we advise her to heed that "call" as well.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Well, now, Mr. *Tribune*, I don't. I have seen too many women, quite as capable as Miss Thompson of being self-supporting individuals, exhausting the last remnant of their strength in the family, and carefully saving every penny for a husband, who never doled out twenty-five cents, without asking the purpose for which it was needed, and reiterating the stale advice to spend it judiciously. I have seen such women, too proud to complain or remonstrate, turn away with a crimson cheek, and a moist eye, to dicker, and haggle, and contrive for this end, when the husband who gave this advice, had effectually blotted out the word self-denial from his own dictionary.

No, Mr. *Tribune*, I differ from you entirely. I advise no woman to refuse twelve hundred independent dollars a year for good, honest labor, to become such a serf as this.

And while we are on this subject, I would like to air the disgust with which I am nauseated, at the idea of any decent, intelligent, self-respecting, capable wife, ever being obliged *to ask* for that which she so laboriously earns, and which is just as much hers by right, as the money that her husband receives from his customers is *his*, instead of his next-door—dry-goods—neighbor's.

No man should thus humiliate a woman; no woman should permit herself to be thus humiliated. I am not now speaking of those foolish women, to whom a ribbon, or a necklace, is dearer than their husband's strength, life, or mercantile honor. I put such women entirely out of the question; only remarking, that if a man marries a fool in the hope of her being pliant, and easily ruled by him, he will find too late that he is mistaken. But that's his affair. Men always have, and always will keep on admiring their own perspicacity in reading female character, when not one in ten knows any more what his wife is spiritually made of, than what sheep furnished the coat for his own back.

Sary Gamp advised her comrade—nurse—to put the mutual bottle on the shelf, and "*look the other way*!"

That's just what I would advise the husbands of intelligent wives to do with regard to the money which they "allow" them, and which one would imagine was

rightly theirs, by virtue of risking their lives every Friday to become the mother of twins; by virtue of, when lying faint and weak beside them, giving out orders for the comfort and well-being of the family down-stairs before they are able to get about; by virtue of *never* being able for one moment, day or night, sick or well, to drop, or to shake, off the responsibility which a *good* wife and mother must always feel, whether present or absent from her family.

Oh! treat such a woman generously. Make up your mind what in justice she should receive in the money way, and don't above all things, wait for her to *ask* you for it, and never, never be mean enough to charge a woman of this kind "to spend it carefully."

I daresay you have done it, and *you*, and *you*; I daresay you are real good fellows too, and *mean* to do what is right. And I know you "love" your wives—*i.e.*, as *men* love—thus—wounding a sensitive spirit, without the least notion you are doing it; thus—charging the tear that follows to a coming toothache or stomach-ache! Great blundering creatures! I sometimes don't know whether to box your ears or hug you. Because the very next minute you will say, or do, some such perfectly lovely thing, that, woman fashion, I exclaim, "Well—well;" but I wont tell you what I do say, because you'll hop right off the stool of repentance, and go to your normal occupation of crowing and bragging.

But, seriously, I do wish you would consider a little this same money question, and when the time comes for payment, don't, as I tell you, open your pocket-book, heave a deep sigh, as you spread a bill on your knee, and give it a despairing glance of love, as you dump it in your wife's outstretched hand. No, sir! follow Sary Gamp's advice: "Put it on the shelf, and look the other way, and don't trouble yourself to tell her to '*make it go as far as she can*,'" because she will naturally do that, and there's where you are a fool again. I should think you'd know by this time, that it will go so far *you* wont see it again your natural lifetime. And why shouldn't it? Does she require to know whether you pay fifteen cents apiece for your cigars; whether you couldn't buy a cheaper kind, and how many a day you smoke? Come now, be honest—would *you* like that?

As I have always declined all requests to lecture, or to speak in public, I may be allowed to make a few remarks on the treatment of those who do.

Can anybody tell me why reporters, in making mention of lady speakers, always consider it to be necessary to report, fully and *firstly*, the dresses worn by them? When John Jones or Senator Rouser frees his mind in public, we are left in painful ignorance of the color and fit of his pants, coat, necktie and vest—and worse still, the shape of his boots. This seems to me a great omission. How can we possibly judge of his oratorical powers, of the strength or weakness of his logic, or of his fitness in any way to mount the platform, when these important points are left unsolved to our feeble feminine imaginations? For one, I respectfully request reporters to ease my mind on these subjects—to tell me decidedly whether a dress, or a frock-

coat, or a bob-tailed jacket was worn by these masculine orators; whether their pants had a stripe down the side, and whether the dress lapels of their coats were faced with silk, or disappointed the anxious and inquiring eye of the public by presenting only a broadcloth surface. I have looked in vain for any satisfaction on these points.

I propose that the present staff of male reporters should be remodelled, and that some enterprising journal should send to Paris for the man-milliner Worth, in order that this necessary branch of reportorial business be more minutely and correctly attended to.

Speaking of reporters, I was present the other night at a female-suffrage meeting, where many distinguished men made eloquent speeches in favor thereof. At the reporters' table sat two young lady reporters side by side with the brethren of the same craft. Truly, remarked I to my companion, it is very well to plead for women's rights, but more delicious to me is the sight of those two girls *taking them*! But, rejoined my cautious male friend, you see, Fanny, a woman couldn't go to report a rat-fight, or a prize-fight, or a dog-fight. *But*, replied I, just let the women go "marching on" as they have begun, and there will soon *be* no rat-fights, dog-fights, or prize-fights to report. It will appear from this, that I believe in the woman *that is to be*. I do—although she has as yet had to struggle with both hands tied, and then had her ears boxed for not doing more execution. Cut the string, gentlemen, and see what you shall see! "Pooh! you are afraid" to knock that chip off our shoulder.

How strange it all seems to me, the more I ponder it, that men can't, or don't, or wont see that woman's enlightenment is man's millennium. "My wife don't understand so and so, and it's no use talking to her."—"My wife will have just so many dresses, and don't care for anything else."—"My wife wont look after my children, but leaves them to nurses, she is so fond of pleasure." So it would seem that these Adams and the "wife thou gavest to be with me," even now find their respective and flowery Edens full of thorns, even *without* that serpent, female suffrage, whose slimy trail is so deprecated.

Put *this* in the crown of your hats, gentlemen! *A fool of either sex is the hardest animal to drive that ever required a bit. Better one who jumps a fence now and then, than your sulky, stupid donkey, whose rhinoceros back feels neither pat or goad.*

POVERTY AND INDEPENDENCE.

DON'T like those sewing-girls," remarked a friend to me. "Why don't they go into some respectable family as chamber-maids, or nurses, or cooks? If they are too proud to to do this, I have no pity for them." Now there is just where the speaker and myself differ. *I* pity them, *because* they are too proud to do this. Besides, I do not think it is altogether because the name or position of "servant" is so obnoxious to them. It is the confinement of their position. It is the duration of their hours of labor—extending into the evening, and often till late in the evening, week after week, to which they object; whereas the working-girl in most other departments of service is released at nightfall, and is her own mistress till another day of toil begins. Now, answer me: Were you, and you, similarly placed, would you not desire, even in the face of the drawbacks attending it, your *evenings* to yourself? I think so. It is true, from "these evenings to themselves," have dated the perdition of many of this class. Still, *young* eyes will never see with old spectacles. Young blood will never course so sluggishly that all work, and no respite, will be accepted without nature's strong protest. "*One* evening out in a week," that is the general holiday for a house servant: would not *your* youth have rebelled, madam, at this? even though your remainder evenings were passed in the bright parlor, with loving eyes resting upon you, instead of the underground kitchen, rebelliously watching the bell-wire? You must look at this subject with their eyes, instead of your own; through their privations, instead of through your privileges, if you would be just.

Said a merry matron, apologetically, to me, who had passed life's meridian, "I never had any youth, and I am taking it now." That is just it! *The heart demands its youth, and, some time or other, it must and will have it.* God grant that to these poor girls, it may come harmlessly,—innocently! But I, for one, can never wonder or condemn, though I often deplore, that, driven at bay, like hunted animals, and many of them with limited knowledge and intelligence, they should snatch at the passing sunbeam, lest another should never gild their lonesome path.

We need a wider charity for these girls; for all those on whom life bears so hardly. We who are well-fed, well-clothed, well-educated, how illy do we, with all these helps to virtue and goodness, perform our part. Let us remember this in our hasty judgment of them, in our disgust that they do not choose for themselves more wisely. Let us not in church, or elsewhere, ask to be forgiven *our* shortcomings, with all these helps, when, if one less enlightened stumbles and falls by the way, we "do not pity them,"—nay, more, because they have done so, we refuse to help them again to their feet.

I have alluded, in a former article, to the cheap and comfortable boarding-houses, as a refuge to the working-girl from the horrors of their tenement-house home. I was descanting upon their advantages not long since to one who has herself been

through many of the most distressing phases of the sewing-girl's life. She heard me silently, and to my surprise, without enthusiasm, when I spoke of the wholesome food, pure air, refreshing baths, free reading-room, and laundry. "What?" asked I—"do you not consider this a blessed asylum for these girls?"

With an emphasis which I cannot convey on paper, she said, as her eye kindled, "Give me rather my poor room, even in the tenement-house, where, if I had a grief, I could cry it out, with no eye but that of my Maker to witness it. I could never be happy to go to my bed at night in company with a dozen others, in ever so clean or spacious an apartment, where there was no privacy. I had rather work ever so hard, and *earn* all I had, than to feel that I was in any measure a recipient of charity,—that I *was in an Institution*, and labelled as an inmate when I passed in and out."

Now there are those who, reading this, will only express disgust. I confess, although it surprised me, that I have a strong sympathy with the self-respect which prompted this frank avowal; and, excellent as is the embryo Institution above alluded to, I yet hope that as its means increase each inmate may have an apartment to herself, be it ever so small, that the poor heart which "knoweth its own bitterness" may not be "intermeddled with" by any stranger.

Never apply the word "tomboy" to a girl who is taking healthy and innocent exercise. Are there not mincing misses enough about us, who pervert girlhood by adult nonsense, till the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint? Better, a thousandfold, be "tomboys" than such *things* as these. "Tomboys" have lungs and chests and rosy cheeks, and grow up to be healthy mothers of healthy children. *Doctors* may not like them, but common-sense and husbands do; though, truth to say, these terms are not always synonymous.

THE HISTORY OF OUR LATE WAR.

ANY able works have already appeared on this subject, and many more will doubtless follow. But *my* History of the War is yet to be written; not indeed *by* me, but *for* me. A history which shall record, not the deeds of our Commanders and Generals, noble and great as they were, because these will scarcely fail of historical record and prominence; but *my* history shall preserve for the descendants of those who fought for our flag, the noble deeds of our *privates*, who shared the danger but missed the glory. Scattered far and wide in our remote villages—hidden away amid our mountains—struggling for daily bread in our swarming cities, are these unrecognized heroes. Travelling through our land, one meets them everywhere; but only as accident, or chance, leads to conversation with them, does the plain man by your side become transfigured in your eyes, till you feel like uncovering your head in his presence, as when one stands upon holy ground. Not only because they were brave upon the battle-field, but for their sublime self-abnegation under circumstances when the best of us might be forgiven our selfishness; in the tortures of the ambulance and hospital—quivering through the laggard hours, that might or might not bring peace and rest and health. Oh! what a book might be written upon the noble unselfishness *there* displayed; not only towards those who fought *for* our flag, but *against* it. The coveted drop of water, handed by one dying man to another, whose sufferings seemed the greater. The simple request to the physician to pass *his* wounds by, till those of another, whose existence was unknown to him a moment before, should have been alleviated. Who shall embalm us these?

Last summer, when I was away in the country, I was accustomed to row every evening at sunset on a lovely lake near by. The boatman who went with me was a sunburnt, pleasant-faced young man, whose stroke at the oar it was poetry to see. He made no conversation unless addressed, save occasionally to little Bright-Eyes, who sometimes accompanied me. One evening, as the sun set gloriously and the moon rose, and the aurora borealis was sending up flashes of rose and silver, I said, "Oh, this is too beautiful to leave. I *must* cross the lake again." I made some remark about the brilliance of the North Star, when he remarked simply, "That star was a good friend to me in the war." "Were you in the war?" asked I; "and all these evenings you have rowed a loyal woman like me about this lake, and I knew nothing of it!" Then, at my request, came the story of Andersonville, and its horrors, told simply, and without a revengeful word; then the thrilling attempt at escape, through a country absolutely unknown, and swarming with danger, during which the North Star, of which I had just spoken, was his only guide. Then came a dark night, when the friendly star, alas! disappeared. But a watch, which he had saved his money to obtain, had a compass on the back of it. Still of what use was that without a light? Our boatman was a Yankee. He caught a glowworm and pinched it. It flashed light sufficient for him to see that he

was heading for one of our camps, where, after many hours of travel, he at last found safety, sinking down insensible from fatigue and hunger, as soon as he reached it. So ravenously did he eat, when food was brought, that a raging fever followed; and when he was carried, a mere skeleton, to his home on the borders of the lovely lake where we were rowing, whose peaceful flow had mocked him in dreams in that seething, noisome prison pen, he did not even recognize it. For months his mother watched his sick-bed, till reason and partial health returned—till by degrees he became what he then was.

When he had finished, I said, "Give me your hand—*both of 'em*—and God bless you!"—and—then I *mentioned* his jailers! Not a word of bitterness passed his lips—only this: "I used to gasp in the foul air at Andersonville, and think of this quiet, smooth lake, and our little house with the trees near it, and long so to see them again, and row my little boat here. But," he added, quietly, "*they* thought they were as right as we, and they *did* fight well!"

I swallowed a big lump in my throat—as our boat neared the shore, and he handed me out—and said, penitently, "Well, if *you* can forgive them, I am sure I ought to; but it will be the hardest work I ever did."—"Well, it is strange," said he: "I have often noticed it, since my return, that you who stayed at home feel more bitter about it, than we who came so near dying there of foul air and starvation."

A rich man, just stepping into the grave, burdened with more money than he has known all his life what to do with, is extolled to the skies for his legacies and bequests here and there—at home and abroad. Now, why all this laudation? Is not the poor servant girl, who can scarce keep herself comfortably clothed, and yet every Sunday puts her pittance religiously into the contribution box, more deserving of praise? And yet who ever takes this other than as a matter of course, save Him who seeth even the widow's mite?

TWO KINDS OF WOMEN.

RS. Jones—do you know her? She looks well to the ways of her household. She knows how every ounce of butter, and every spoonful of tea and coffee are disposed of. She is posted as to the sugar, and milk and potatoes, and calculates to a moment how long-lived must be a joint of meat, or what is the weight of a loaf of bread. She understands what should be the perpetuity of kindling wood, and knows when it is diverted from its original purpose as an *auxiliary*, by a dilatory cook, and used as a principal, to hurry up a late breakfast. You can't cheat Mrs. Jones. Every pot, pan, basin, knife, fork, spoon, in her establishment, serves its legitimate purpose, and no other; and never loses its edge or polish, or disappears "unbeknownst" into the ash-barrel. She scorns to buy preserves or pickles, how well soever made, and though she may encounter no pecuniary loss in doing so; she thinks it an excellent use of her time, although they are "well off," to prepare them with her own deft hands. She is at home when her husband leaves, and she is at home when her husband comes back. She does much of the sewing and fitting of family garments, and all the mending; and she often calls upon the minister to baptize a new baby. She is cheerful and content in her snuggery of a house, and every saucepan in it is surrounded with a halo. "Woman's Rights" simply sets her giggling, when mentioned. Her own family tub sets firm on its bottom—isn't that enough? Year after year passes. The freshness has left her face, and the features have sharpened, as she whirls round and round in this little maelstrom, with no desire to catch breath for one single moment. Occasionally she goes outside of her own door, but feels better inside, and hurries home as if she had committed a crime, in letting up her martinet superintendence for one moment.

As to books and newspapers, she never looks at either. "She says she has no time." I don't know whether she ever thinks that her children will some day grow up, and may ask questions which it were a pity their mother should be too ignorant to answer. I don't know whether she ever thinks her husband may weary at evening, of the history of the family potato. Since it is cooked invariably to his liking, it may be that is all he requires. But after he has eaten his dinner, and is satisfied—such is man—that I wouldn't like to dismiss Mrs. Jones to the nursery and put a bright woman in her place, unless "ma" lived round the corner.

Now Mrs. Smith lives opposite Mrs. Jones. The devil might fly away with *her* saucepans, and she wouldn't care. Why does she hire servants, if she herself is to superintend saucepans? Is Mr. Smith always home to dinner, that *she* need be? Has a woman no rights? Is it for her to be absorbed by the miserable family potato, when many women have no potato at all? Her answer is on the public platform. Smith indeed turns pale to think of it; but who or what is Smith? He's only a man,—a tyrannical, overbearing man, possibly of the worst type, who believes in "whipping females." Her "mission" is to reform such men—peaceably, if she can; belligerently,

if she must; but it has got to "come off" somehow. Meantime the nurse rubs her children's noses *up* instead of down; fills their eyes with soap-suds, and then boxes their ears for "whining about it;" eats *their* lunch and tosses them *hers*. She tells the youngest child of the "black man who swallows little children whole" when she wants it to be still in bed, so that she may converse with her "cousin" in the area; and then wonders "what *can* ail the little dear," when its progressive mother returns from her public speech-making, to find it in a stiff fit. As to Mr. Smith, he hates women's rights—he wants something to eat.

Now here are two female extremists. I don't see the necessity of either; but after saying this, I frankly declare that, had I to choose, Mrs. Jones has my preference. *Her* children have a home at least. They have good wholesome food, and clothes suitable to the weather. If they are sick, they have watchful care. And no mother, unless she first secure all this to their helplessness, has any right, in my opinion, on the public platform. This much Mrs. Jones hath done. Possibly Jones, her husband, takes it, like sunshine, as a matter of course, and needing no special thanks. Men are more stupid, and ignorant, than ugly, on this and kindred points. *They* don't dream, unless in very exceptionable cases, how a wife longs sometimes to have a husband testify his pleasure at her invariable good cheer in some other way than by gobbling it up, till he is as torpid as an anaconda, until next feeding time. *He* never feels the need of such recognition; and so, if his attention is called to it by a half-smothered, weary sigh from some little wife who can't do without it, why, he thinks it "babyish." *Such a man ought to marry a man*—that's my verdict. Where's the sense of plucking a flower to put your foot on it? Better take a stone post for better, or worse, and have done with it. You can't dam—n up a woman's feelings as you would a village stream. You can't choose her for her tender, womanly ways, and then expect when you get her home that she will "heads up" with an unwinking stare at you for further orders the rest of her life. If that's the wife you wanted, why not take one of those figures outside the store-doors in Broadway, with a dress pinned on, which, when twirled round, stand stock still till they get another twirl? *They* are *headless*, to be sure, but they are *so* docile!

SUNDAY MORNING.

OW many pleasant breakfast-tables it looks down upon! No need to hurry away to office, or store, or counting-room. Fathers come leisurely down in dressing-gown and slippers, and sip their coffee without danger of choking. They have time to look round and see how tall the children are growing, and that nothing in this world is so beautiful as a rosy baby fresh from slumber. Mother, too, has the old girlish smile, that comes not often on a week-day, or if it does, father has not time to notice it, and that, perhaps, after all, is the reason it comes so seldom. It is pleasant, after eggs and coffee, to sit comfortably down, the centre of a ring of happy faces, and hear the church-bells chime. Time enough yet to go, for this is the first bell.

Church-bells are not, to my ear, an "impertinence." One is a free agent. I am free to go, which I like to do; you are free to stay, if you prefer; though I may think you make a mistake. I don't say that I should go every Sunday to hear a man who was always binding doctrines together like bundles of dry sticks, and thrusting them at his yawning hearers. I want to hear a sermon that any poor soul who straggles into church, from any by-lane or alley, can understand, and carry home with him to his cellar or garret; not a sermon that comes on chariot wheels, but afoot, and with a warm, life-like grasp for every honest, aye, and *dis*honest, hand in the assembly, defaulter or Magdalen; for who bade you slam heaven's gate in their faces?

I want a *human* sermon. I don't care what Melchisedek, or Zerubbabel, or Kerenhappuk did, ages ago; I want to know what *I* am to do, and I want somebody besides a theological bookworm to tell me; somebody who is sometimes tempted and tried, and is not too dignified to own it; somebody like me, who is always sinning and repenting; somebody who is glad and sorry, and cries and laughs, and eats and drinks, and *wants* to fight when they are trodden on, and *don't*! That's the minister for me. I don't want a spiritual abstraction, with stony eyes and petrified fingers, and no blood to battle with. What credit is it to *him* to be proper? How can he understand *me*? Were there only such ministers in the pulpit, I wouldn't go to church either, because my impatient feet would only beat a tattoo on the pew floor till service was over: but, thank God! there are! and while they preach I shall go to hear them, and come home better and happier for having done it.

So I pray you don't abolish *my* Sunday, whatever you may do with yours. Don't take away my blessed Sunday breakfast, when we all have time to love one another. Don't take away the Sabbath bells, which I so love to hear. Don't take away my human minister, whose God is no tyrant, and is better pleased to see us go smiling home from church, than bowing our heads like a bulrush, and groaning back to our dinners, till all you anti-Sabbatarians are mad to abolish Sunday,—and no wonder.

Our Catholic brethren have set us, at least one good example; their churches are not silent as the tomb on week-days. Their worshippers do not do up all their religion on Sunday. It may be only for a few moments they step in through that open church-

door, on a week-day, to kneel and lay down burdens too heavy else to be borne. I like the custom. I should rather say, I like the reminder, and the opportunity thus afforded them; and I heartily wish that all our Protestant churches could be thus opened. If rich Christians object to the promiscuous use of their velvet cushions and gilded prayer-books, at least let the aisles and altar be free for those who need God on the week-days; for the poor, the tried, the tempted; for those who shrink, in their shabby habiliments, from the Sunday exhibition of fine toilettes and superfine Christianity. Were I a minister, and obliged to preach to paniers and diamonds and satins, on Sunday, I think I should *have* to ease my heart in some such way as this, to make my pastoral life endurable, else my office would seem to me the most hollow of all mockeries. "The rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all," should be inscribed outside my church door, had I one. I could not preach to those paniers and their owners. My tongue would be paralyzed at those kneeling distortions of womanhood, bearing such a resemblance to organ-grinders' monkeys. I am not sure that I should not grow hysterical over it, and laugh and cry in the same breath, instead of preaching. I can never tell what vent my disgust would take; but I am sure it must have some escape-valve. You may say that such worshippers (Heaven save the mark!) *need* preaching to. I tell you that women, so given over to "the devil and all his works," are past praying for; "having eyes, they see not; having ears, they hear not." They are ossified, impervious; they are Dead-Sea apples, full of ashes. There! now I feel better.

Having alluded to our Roman Catholic friends, allow me to ask leave of them to have the cross surmount all our *Protestant* churches, unless they have taken out a patent for the same. It is lovely to me, this symbol, as I pass along our streets. It rests my heart to look at it, amid the turmoil, and din, and hurry, and anxious faces, and sorrowful faces, and, worse than all, empty faces, that I meet. I say to myself, there is truth *there*; there is hope and comfort there, and this tangle of life is *not* the end. When I am a Protestant minister, the dear cross shall be on my church, and nobody shall stay away from it because they are ragged or poor, or because the cushions are too nice. Oh, I like Catholicism for *that*. They are nearer heaven than Protestants on this point.

I am very glad for the Protestant noonday prayer-meetings, wheresoever held. One may have a great spiritual need on other days than Sunday. One may happen in here—if such things ever *happen*, which I doubt—and *there* learn that need, and the way to satisfy it. The devil is cunningly and wisely busy *every day* and every night in the week. Why should good Christians think to circumvent this skilful diplomatist in one?—on *Sunday* only? The devil makes *easy* all the paths leading to perdition. Christians make hard and difficult the road to heaven, with their fine churches, and fine worshippers, and empty preaching once a week. And all around us pitiful hands are outstretched, and hungry hearts are waiting for the loving Christian word of help, temporal and spiritual; and men and women go down into the maelstrom of despair,

folly, and sin; and we open our churches and let *well-dressed* Christians in to pray for them on Sunday. Sunday! the word has no meaning. Call it Monday or Tuesday, or Fourth of July, or anything you will, but not "Sunday." *That* once meant something.

Let me give you a postscript to a sermon I once heard. "Middle age is inevitable routine, but keep your *souls* above it," I heard a clergyman remark the other night. He "knew that it was difficult," he said, "not to merge one's self at that crisis in the shop, in the store, in the office; difficult *not* to become a mere drudge and a machine; but still, avoiding it was the only hope for this life." Oh, how my heart echoed these words—not for men, but for my own sex, of whose routine life the clergyman said nothing. I wanted to get up and say to him, "My dear sir, your address is eloquent, and true, scholarly, and sound, so far as it goes. It *is* the only hope for this life that these men of business should not become mere tools." But I wanted to ask him if men, with their freedom of action—men who, out in the world, inevitably come into collision with *stirring*, not *stagnant* life—find this difficult, what of their wives? With twenty nerves where men have one to be jarred and agonized, with the pin and needle fret, of every minute, which they may never hope to escape or get away from; tied hand and foot, day and night, week after week, with the ten thousand cords, invisible often to the dull eye of husband and father, who accepts at evening the neat and pleasant result, without a thought of how it was accomplished—without a thought of the weariness of that inexorable grind of detail necessary to it—without a thought that a change of scene is either necessary or desirable for the wife and mother who is surely under its benumbing influence, merging *her* "soul" till she is a mere machine.

I wanted to hear this clergyman say something about that. I wanted to know of him whether these women were doing God and their husbands service, by so sinking the spiritual part of them that one could hardly tell that it had existence. I wanted to ask him whether, if their husbands, through indifference or selfishness, or both, gave no thought to this matter, if he—set in a high place to teach the people—had no word of advice to such men, that they look as well to the spiritual deterioration of the *mothers* of their children as to their own—the fathers. Nay, I insist that for the mother it is of *more* consequence, as having infinitely more to do with the forming years of these children. And what time, pray, have many of these "routine" mothers for "thought," properly so called? What time for reading even the daily papers, to keep up intelligently with the great issues of the day, of which it is a shame and disgrace for any American wife and mother to be ignorant? How can they in this way be fit companions for their children's future? How can they answer their questions, on this subject and on that, while their vision is for ever bounded by the horizon of the physical wants of the household? You may preach "woman's duty" to me till you are hoarse; and I will preach to you the lust and the selfishness, which is ever repeating the dilemma of "the old woman in the shoe," till she has not an interval to think whether she or her brood *have* souls. "Routine life" of *men*! Men can and do get out of it—"business takes them away from home on journeys." "Business" takes him out

pleasant evenings; on rainy ones, he never has "business;" then he goes early to bed, to prepare for a long evening of "business" when the sky clears.

His wife—well, "she don't seem to need it; or if she does, she don't say so;" and I might add, in the language of Dickens's nurse, Sary Gamp, "it is little she needs, and that little she don't get," at least from him.

Routine men! Oh, bah! "Routine men" have a result to show for their "routine." They have clerks—not from Intelligence-offices either—who have to do as they bid them. They also lock up shop at dark. They also walk or ride home in the fresh air, and talk with their male friends while doing it. They also are not dependent on the whim or caprice of any man to take them out for a breath of fresh air at night, after an exhaustive day of indoor stifling detail. And so, though the sermon to which I listened was excellent *from a man to men*, I made up my mind to add this little Appendix to women, from a woman, on the routine-woman's side of the question. You may talk of the selfishness of women till your head is white; there never lived that selfish woman so execrably selfish as a selfish man can be. I don't say *you* are so, sir: though at this distance, I venture to inquire whether, were you in your wife's place, you wouldn't occasionally like to climb up on the edge of the peck-measure in which she daily revolves, and look about outside, even if it should tip over on the whole brood of young ones in the process?

JUSTICE FOR CLERGYMEN.

AN anybody tell why clergymen should not receive fees for attending funerals? They receive fees, and generous ones often, for performing the marriage-ceremony, which is very unnecessary in comparison; a wedding being a joyful, happy, inspiriting occasion, with its bright faces, sweet flowers, and happy congratulations of friends; the exceptions to which are so few as not to need enumerating; and it must needs rest a man instead of wearying him, cobwebbed all over with theological tangles as he is, to witness all this; for no matter what vicissitudes fate and the future have in store for the two he has made one, at least for *that* hour they are supremely blessed, and he has made them so. But a *funeral*! with all its present unnecessary and dreadful accumulation of horrors; with its closed blinds, its piling up of sable garments, its pale dead face, which needs no such auxiliaries of gloom. Imagine a clergyman, already worn out, mentally and physically, entering such a room, filled with mourning friends, to whom even the Saviour's own sweet words would seem cold, who must each for himself tread the wine-press *alone*, till such time as they can find *Him*. Imagine this minister trying, by prayer and exhortation, to lift that heavy load of sorrow which all who have grieved know, that time and faith alone can lighten. Then he goes and looks into the face of the dead—oh! how many dead faces has he looked at, through the eyes of others, in the same way!—then he offers a friendly hand to the widow, or the orphan, as the case may be, and then with this immense draft on his sympathies, with those heart-rending sobs still sounding in his ears, perhaps within that very hour, he is called to a repetition of the sad scene. I am very sure that any clergymen of experience and sensibility will say, that I have not overstated this wear and tear of feeling in the delicate endeavor to say just the right thing, to the differing faiths of the craving, sorrowing hearts present.

Now why, I ask, should clergymen, in addition to their other exhaustive duties, be expected to go through this most exhaustive service of all, without remuneration? More especially, when one considers the often danger of contagious atmospheric influences, at such times and places, upon his tired frame.

I have often pondered, without yet being able to find a shadow of a reason for this unjust demand upon clerical strength. If you say it is the custom, I only say it is time that, with other bad customs, it were reformed; and more—since clergymen themselves have their lips delicately closed on this especial subject, while on others they might be considered at liberty to speak. That's why *I* have spoken for them.

I like ministers. I was brought up with them. My father's house was a minister's tavern, lacking the sign swinging before the door. I was a wild slip in those days; that's why they always "wanted a little conversation with Sarah." It was philanthropic, but thrown away. I had been told so often that I was "a child of wrath," that I had it at my fingers' ends—I might have said, at my toes' ends, for it was they who helped me

out the nearest door after meals, lest I should hear the stale announcement again. I persisted I "loved God," when I was asked. Why shouldn't I? for no bugaboo of anybody's raising could have made me believe I was born by him to be tormented. The flowers, the clouds, the ocean, the sun, moon, and stars—what priceless gifts were they! No "doctrine" or "creed" could rob me of them; and didn't *he* make them, and give me a soul to enjoy them? It was of no use telling me I was a "child of wrath" under circumstances like these! One soft sweet breath from my flower-garden knocked that idea "all to smithereens."

Now I didn't hate those ministers for trying to darken what should have been, and what *was*, in spite of them, youth's festival hour. I knew they *thought* they were right, and I believe them to be truly good, though mistaken, men. They didn't know that, child as I was, if *I* ever went to Heaven, it would be taking hold of my Heavenly Father's hand, not cowering before him through fear of "hell." So they fired over my curls, when they got me in a corner, and talked to me that way. They didn't make me hate "meetin'" either; though I was driven there to hear so many "seventeenth-lies" at the point of the bayonet; and when skewered up on the seat between rows of big folks, I felt as if little ants were creeping out from under my finger-nails, so fidgety did I get for the blessed outdoors.

But I have not outgrown "meetin'" yet, and I count no Sunday a Sunday when I don't go there some part of the day. Oh, had they only known *how* to talk to me, instead of driving me within myself, and making me put my worst religious foot foremost. But clergymen have found a better way since, thank God! Still I often smile at the bits of the old leaven in the ministerial make up. How they will wonder at it all, when eternity's light shines down on their life-path, and shows them these mistakes. For I make no apology here for boldly asserting that a minister can, and does, and always will, make an occasional mistake; although I was once pounced down upon by an evangelical critic, who talked to me about "wounding the Lord in the house of his friends," when I said so. It is just such stuff as that, that drives everybody *from* the "Lord." Better face the music, and own up, that even ministers are *human*. For my part, were I a minister, and fenced in, and badgered about, and cross-questioned and interfered with, and expected to be a sound, rounded, well-disposed human being, morally, mentally, and physically, all the same as if a coroner's inquest wasn't squatting on my free-agency every hour in the day, I'll warrant you I should make a great many more mistakes than they do. Old Adam in me, would soon see that they didn't want material for a verdict to suit their narrowness.

And now I hope I have shown you that I am a friend to ministers. So that without getting a boxed ear, I must tell you here, what a laugh I got out of a lot of them yesterday. You see, I was in an omnibus alone, save one lady, when a meeting of some sort in one of our churches "bust up,"—excuse the expression—"bust up." Five ministers emerging from the church porch, hailed the omnibus and got in, and decorously seated themselves. Now, some ministers look jolly, and as if they were

alive. These were thin, cavernous, and had the ten commandments written all over them. They had heard of New York Delilahs evidently, for they wouldn't see the *fare* of the lady or myself between our gloved fingers waiting for the driver—not a bit of it! Catch them at it! They looked straight past us both, safely out the window at an innocent brick wall. Oh, heavens! how I laughed! It carried me back to the days I was a curly-headed little sinner, rebelling at being called "a child of wrath." I wanted to say, "Brethren, I too am a Christian"—and I will persist that I am; so don't be afraid of my innocent female pennies, nor "cross" yourselves because your foot accidentally touched the hem of my robe when you got in; for though I believe in ministers, I *don't* like to have the devil laugh in his sleeve at their queer, poky, solemn ways, and say to himself, "Aha! so would I have it."

May clergymen sneeze? Well—not exactly that; but a question quite as foolish, I saw gravely propounded and treated, the other day, in a religious paper. The debate was upon this highly important point: "Whether it was right for ministers to play croquet." Now I really *had* hoped that the day had gone by when the only amusement allowed to ministers was counting the scores of little heads that surrounded their table. I did hope that they might wash their faces on a towel, though it had not a funereal urn embroidered in the corners. And that they need not of necessity plant a cypress, or weeping willow, at their front door, to designate their raven-like calling; or banish every plant from their garden save the funereal rue and rosemary. It seems I was mistaken; more's the pity. Now if there is anything the devil likes, it is fine-spun, wire-drawn distinctions, on unimportant questions like these. If there is anything he likes, it is this ascetic rendering of religious things, to disgust the young, and throw a pall over that which *should* attract them by a wise recognition of their human needs. When we place a young plant down cellar and shut out light and sunshine, though it may put out shoots, we all know that they are white, sickly, and destined early to perish; just so with this misnamed "godliness" which the well-meaning but over-zealous religionist would thrust upon us and persuade us was doing God-service. I tell you it is *not*. I tell you that a minister, above all others, needs innocent and proper recreation, like croquet. Every summer, in my travels to and fro, I meet "ministers" enjoying their brief respite of a summer-vacation; most of them bearing unmistakable evidence in their pale faces and narrow chests, of their great necessity for it. I have watched them, sympathetically, as they sat on the piazzas of the hotels and boarding-houses where we were thrown together. I have seen them commit this unpardonable sin of "playing croquet" on a nice green lawn, while the fresh mountain air tinged their pale cheeks, and their eyes grew brighter, and their tones grew cheerful, and I blessed God for the sight. I said to myself, *that's* the way to foil the devil, when the young people found, day after day, that even a "*minister*" could be cheerful himself and promote cheerfulness; and that religion, after all, was not death to innocent happiness. I have been with ministers to the ten-pin alley, in company with their wives, children, and friends; I have climbed mountains with them, when I had a better

frolic than I ever had with any of the laymen; and after a three-hours climb, and we all sat upon the top and enjoyed the view of the surrounding country, and, seated upon the grass, ate our luncheon, I never perceived that religion suffered by it. I *have* often, on the contrary, heard young people of the party say, "Well, this is the first time I ever *really* liked a minister. I thought they were all stiff and solemn, and—to use a juvenile but expressive epithet—'poky'"! Nor when the following Sunday, sweet as Sunday always dawns on the hills and valleys, dawned on us, in some such lovely spot, and these same clergymen were requested to preach, sometimes in the parlor of the hotel, sometimes, which was better, in a grove near the house, did *I* for one perceive anything incongruous in his doing so, though the audience was the very same merry party of the day before. And when they have joined in the sweet hymn under the trees, where he stood with uncovered head, as in God's best temple, I confess to much more devotion than I am apt to feel, when surrounded and hedged in, and, allow me to say, sometimes *stifled* with all the clerical city paraphernalia, whose husk often seems to me so to shut in and compress the kernel, that one almost doubts if it has existence.

Ministers play croquet? I wish every minister had a violin and a brisk saddle-horse. Away with this bogus sanctity. Take a lesson from our Roman Catholic friends in the virtue of cheerfulness. Drive not *from* you, but draw soothingly, caressingly to you the lambs of the flock. Terror never yet made a true Christian. Frigidity never yet glorified God. The world is not a charnel-house. Else the blue sky would have been as black as some of these ascetics fain would make it. No! It is full of perfume and song and color, and you can never shut the eyes of young people to it with your distorted views of life. Oh, be wiser, lest the sad rebound of the atheist come, and they find only at the end of a life misspent, that in their zeal to prove your detested "religion" a sham, they had overlooked the fact that the counterfeit presupposes the *true coin*.

How seldom, in judging of those who excite our anger or contempt, do we judge them, as the Almighty does, by the extenuating circumstances of birth and education, and the lack of spiritual light! "Nobody ever told me;" "I did not know it was wrong;" "Nobody cared whether I was good or bad." What pitiful words are these! The Saviour recognized these facts when he said, "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

THE OLD MAID OF THE PERIOD.

HE don't shuffle round in "skimpt" raiment, and awkward shoes, and cotton gloves, with horn side-combs fastening six hairs to her temples; nor has she a sharp nose, and angular jaw, and hollow cheeks, and only two front teeth. She don't read "Law's Serious Call," or keep a cat, or a snuff-box, or go to bed at dark, save on vestry-meeting nights, nor scowl at little children, or gather catnip, or apply a broomstick to astonished dogs.

Not a bit of it. The modern "old maid" is round and jolly, and has her full complement of hair and teeth, and two dimples in her cheek, and has a laugh as musical as a bobolink's song. She wears pretty, nicely fitting dresses too, and cunning little ornaments around her plump throat, and becoming bits of color in her hair, and at her breast, in the shape of little knots and bows; and her waist is shapely, and her hands have sparkling rings, and no knuckles; and her foot is cunning, and is prisoned in a bewildering boot; and she goes to concerts and parties and suppers and lectures and matinees, and she don't go alone either; and she lives in a nice house, earned by herself, and gives jolly little teas in it. She don't care whether she is married or not, nor need she. She can afford to wait, as men often do, till they have "seen life," and when their bones are full of aches, and their blood tamed down to water, and they have done going out, and want somebody to swear at and to nurse them—then marry!

Ah! the modern old maid has her eye-teeth cut. She takes care of herself, instead of her sister's nine children, through mumps, and measles, and croup, and chicken-pox, and lung fever and leprosy, and what not.

She don't work that way for no wages and bare toleration, day and night. No, sir! If she has no money, she teaches, or she lectures, or she writes books or poems, or she is a book-keeper, or she sets types, or she does anything but hang on to the skirts of somebody's else husband, and she feels well and independent in consequence, and holds up her head with the best, and asks no favors, and "*Woman's Rights*" has done it!

That awful bugbear, "Woman's Rights"! which small-souled men, and, I am sorry to say, narrow *women* too, burlesque and ridicule, and wont believe in, till the Juggernaut of Progress knocks them down and rides over them, because they will neither climb up on it, nor get out of the way.

The fact is, the *Modern* Old Maid is as good as the Modern Young Maid, and a great deal better, to those who have outgrown bread and butter. She has sense as well as freshness, and conversation and repartee as well as dimples and curves.

She carries a dainty parasol, and a natty little umbrella, and wears killing bonnets, and has live poets and sages and philosophers in her train, and knows how to use her eyes, and don't care if she never sees a cat, and couldn't tell a snuff-box from a

patent reaper, and has a bank-book and dividends: yes, sir! and her name is Phœbe or Alice; and Woman's Rights has done it.

A newspaper lately announced that the fashion of blue coats and brass buttons for gentlemen had received its death-blow. Now, listen, ye men who are constantly preaching to us women, about our "slavery to fashion." It was done by Prince Arthur, who *didn't* wear it at a recent great public ball. Deadly stab! We hope the gentlemen who did appear in that costume will not commit suicide. But if we might give them a little bit of advice, it would be, that they should keep on wearing blue coats and brass buttons, just *because* "the Prince" didn't. Show yourself superior to fashion, gentlemen, as you so often advise ladies to do. Try the boot on *that* foot. Don't throw aside a good coat for the puerile reason that it is out of fashion! Oh, no!

THE NURSE OF THE PERIOD.

LL honor to Mr. Bergh for his remedial measures to prevent cruelty to animals. Cats, they say, have nine lives; so, with this in their favor, will the gentleman above mentioned let them wriggle a while, and devote that portion of his time to an animal which has only one life. I refer to the New York child—the *rich* New York child. If he will take a walk through any of our city parks with his eyes open, he cannot fail to see suffering enough among this class to enlist his warmest sympathies. I often stroll through the parks to hear the birds sing, and to see the children. One day last week I saw a bright little boy of four years amusing himself by picking up little twigs that had fallen from the trees, while his nurse was engaged in interminable gossip with one of her class. Turning her head suddenly, she perceived him engaged in this harmless and natural amusement. Snatching them from his hand, she took each little twig separately and struck him with each across his happy little face; then, throwing them away out of his reach, left him standing there, sobbing, with nothing to do, while she continued her chapter of gossip. Walking on a little farther, I saw a little girl who had strayed across the path to look at a "dolly" which another child was drawing in a little wagon. It was a wonderful "dolly;" with flaxen curls, and pink boots, and a muslin dress; and its eyes were closed in slumber, after the fashion of the doll of the period, while in a recumbent position. Oh! the sweet little face, as it peered into the tiny wagon, and the precocious *mother* look of adoration at the "dolly"! Instantly came darting after her the Gorgon nurse, and with a smart slap upon her head and a shake of her little shoulders, till her bright hair flew quite over the frightened little face, she tore her violently away, and seating herself upon a bench, where she had been talking with a coarse-looking man, set the sobbing child so hard upon her knee that I could distinctly hear it catch its breath. I mention here only these two instances of brutal treatment, which I could multiply by dozens. Why do not mothers take pains to follow their nurses occasionally, to see if all is right with their children when out of doors? And why could not Mr. Bergh order some *backs* placed to the torturing benches in our parks where the little children sit? The Central Park benches are a good model in this regard, as many a weary pedestrian can testify. And while he is up there looking at them with a view to this, if he will just pass under the damp bridges, and rout out those self-same nurses, who sit there talking with their beaux, instead of taking their little charges out into the sunshine, and among the flowers, as they were told to do, *this* also would be a humanitarian act.

In fact, *the rich child of the period* is at present an object for *his* especial consideration. Deserted apparently by its natural protector, the mother, except so far as its dress is concerned, it is peculiarly helpless and friendless, at least when out of doors. I speak advisedly; for not a day passes that my blood does not boil at the cruelty it endures; at the innocent little instincts, for the gratification of which it is

immediately slapped, as if they were crimes; just as if we should stone a bird for warbling, or a bee for humming, or a leaf for fluttering in the sweet south wind.

Oh! the harsh Juggernaut wheel which crushes out all this sweetness into the dust!

And what of the *temper* permanently spoiled and soured by such roughness and injustice? What of the aching little head, which is slapped and shaken? What of the tired little feet, while the nurse and her comrades occupy the seat, and the little ones, forbidden to play, lean wearily against the nurse's knee, and cry for "mamma"? Surely, where is mamma? Good Mr. Bergh, do *you* be the rich children's "mamma," and let the cat with her "nine lives" look out for herself!

A LOOK BACKWARD.

H! to be a child again. My only treasures, bits of shell and stone and glass. To love nothing but maple sugar. To fear nothing but a big dog. To go to sleep without dreading the morrow. To wake up with a shout. Not to have seen a dead face. Not to dread a living one. To be able to *believe*. Does life give us anything, in after years, as compensation for the lack of all this; I asked, as I watched the busy little feet about me, never weary of chasing some butterfly of the minute. But then when this thought overshadowed me it was a blue day. Things had somehow got "contrary." My shoe might have pinched, or my belt have been too tight; or I had been up too long without my coffee; or I had forgotten the touch of my first baby's velvet cheek, or my mother's praise of my first pie, or my exultation when I cut and fitted down a carpet all myself, sewing on the thick seams till my fingers were swollen and sore, because help was not to be had. I remember, when it was finished, how intensely I admired myself and that carpet. Then I have strutted round very proudly in dresses of my own fitting, that "were fits." And once I roasted a piece of beef, and seasoned it with saleratus, instead of salt; think of the triumph of that moment! But that was owing to a too-fascinating novel under my cooking-apron, in a day when novels were forbidden fruit. And once, at the romantic age of twelve years, I gave a little blue-eyed boy one of my long, yellow curls, and he threw it in the gutter, and said "he hated girl's hair," but then another boy was standing by at the time, and the world's jeer was too much for him; but I may mention in this connection, that the next handful of "three-cornered nuts" he offered me, when we were alone, followed that curl into the gutter!

I have also dim recollections of "seating" a pair of trousers, to see if I had any undeveloped talent in that line; but I have a lurking suspicion that I must have interfered with their original shape, for though my efforts received due commendation, I am confident those breeches were never worn afterward. But I think my failure came of my always running away, in my girlhood, whenever the family tailoress came to reside with us for a period, to make innumerable vests, jackets, etc., for my little brothers. In revenge she prophesied that, when I was married, I should have always boys, and be very glad of her presence. When she learned years after, that I had three *girls*, she remarked, in a limp and crestfallen state, that "it beat all I should have my own way *in such a matter as that*!"

Oh, yes, I suppose there is something to be got out of the world besides dolls and sugar-candy; but whether it is worth while to go through all we do to secure it, remains yet the unsolved problem.

Grown people, doubtless, have their crucifixions. Women, I know, "die daily." But I am certain, from observation and reflection, that some children, and very small ones too, suffer quite as much as it is possible for adults to do. I shall never forget a punishment measured out to me, when a fat little chub at school. I had committed the

heinous offence of "whispering to one of the boys." I don't recollect what it was about. I only remember that Georgie smiled kindly at me on that first terrible day when I took my seat on a narrow bench, without any back, to "keep very still;" which was then, and is now, the most fiendish torment that can be devised for me.

Directly my name was called to "stand up in the middle of the floor." *His* name, "Georgie," was also called. With very red faces, out of which all the smile had gone, we confronted each other. Miss Birch then turned us back to back, and with a string of twine tied our elbows together, saying to me as she did so, "Since you like boys, you shall have enough of 'em." Now Georgie, true to the instincts of his sex, no sooner felt himself "bound" to the little creature, whom he the moment before adored, than he began to pull at the cruel string, till it cut into my fat bare arm, with torturing sharpness; his jacket sleeve protecting him from the pain he inflicted on me. There we stood, "the boys" *laughing* at Georgie. What little man could stand being "hen-pecked," even at that tender age? For me, I would not have shed a tear, had he cut my arm in two. I let him pull and tweak, and bore it with Spartan endurance till our penance was over, and school was "let out."

"Did you care?" asked the girls of me, going home. "No," answered I, huskily, with my chin in the air, twitching nervously at my white pinafore. I said nothing about it when I got home, but went up garret to cry it out. That Georgie should have hurt me *on purpose*, when I was in disgrace! That he should not have walked home with me from school, as before; or that he—a *boy*—should be "afraid," though a thousand of "the boys" looked on, to speak to a girl—to speak to *me*! *His* reign was over from that moment, spite of his curly black hair and glittering white teeth. I staid up garret till I had it all out among the rafters, and then washed my face and went down to my dinner.

The next morning I took my satchel and went to school. When I got as far as the corner of the street, Georgie was there waiting for me. I didn't see him. I looked straight at the lamp-post. He said softly, "Sarah!" I didn't hear. I planted my little boots firmly on the sidewalk and trotted on. He had *not* been my friend in my trouble. Failing in *that*, he had failed in everything. This was my first life-battle. I have had others since, with greater capacity for suffering; but I thought then, nothing could be worse than little Georgie's defection.

One day I was walking, with my two little girls beside me, and met "Georgie," to whom I had never spoken since our childish falling out. He was a physician then, in good practice, and as handsome as a man, as he had been as a child.

We each laughed, and passed on. For one, I was glad that I was not "tied" to him, save only for those few moments.

I may add, however, by way of postscript, that if Miss Birch imagined that she then and there cured me of "whispering to the boys," it was a fallacy.

Have you a habit of "putting off till a better time"—through an indolence inexplicable even to yourself—little matters that may seem trifling, but which you should really consider as tests of character? To such we say, *fight* this inclination with a persistent strength which will take no denial, if you ever wish to be or to accomplish anything in this world; for rest assured, it is the little fox at the foot of the vine, which will nibble away till every bud and blossom of the future shall be covered with mildew and blight.

VARIETIES OF HUMAN NATURE.

HOW me an "easy person," and I will show you a selfish one. Good-natured he may be; why not? since the disastrous consequences of his "easiness" are generally shouldered by other people. He always "guesses it is all right," though he knows it is all wrong. None so blind as they who don't wish to see. To right an abuse, is to tread on somebody's corns, and then that Somebody might turn and tread on his. For instance, some boys in the street are pelting a poor, drunken woman. "Well—boys *will* do such things." He takes a journey with his family and stops at a hotel in the dog-days, and the hotel clerk assigns him a room which is right over a fiery kitchen. He "guesses" there was no other to give; if so, why didn't the clerk say so? That might possibly do if the clerk didn't *always* give him the room over the hotel kitchen. He gets up from his seat in the car to step out upon the platform; a very *odorous* individual takes his seat, much to the disgust of his family. When asked to eject him, he replies, that he is not sure that the law in such cases is in his own favor; so he takes another seat, and leaves to them the new and uncongenial neighbor. The grocer sends him bad butter, instead of the good for which he bargained; but he thinks it was the grocer's boy who did it, and that *he* didn't do it *purposely*, and that he wont do it again. The milkman overcharges in his bill: well, very likely grass was scarce, or there was some good reason for it; beside, he can give his family a dollar or two less, the next time money is wanted,—and it is always wanted,—and that will make it all square; thus proving the adage, "that nobody can be generous without doing an injustice to somebody." Mr. Easy orders a coat; and when it comes home the sleeves are too short; but he don't like to send it back. He guesses the cutter understood the order to be just so; besides it is paid for and settled. Mr. Easy always pays for things before they come home;—he thinks it looks like distrust of your fellow-creatures if you don't;—and so he has perpetual short sleeves in his coats, and perpetually his trousers come home too long in the leg; and his wife has to keep on fibbing, and tell him they are just right, and it is the latest fashion; for fear he will ask her, as she goes by the tailor's store, just to step in and mention it, because *she* is so good at such things, you know, and don't mind speaking up; which accomplishment, desirable as it is, he prefers her to exercise *outside* the house; *in*-doors it must be kept in pickle.

The cook sends up the meat underdone. Mr. Easy remarks, apologetically, that it was a larger piece than usual; as if just there, the cook's judgment, if she had any, was not expected to come in, by putting it on to roast a little earlier, else what is the use of a cook?

Now, *Mr.* Easy's wife believes in eternal justice—obedience or the guillotine. *She* thinks that the person who, through indolence, offers a premium for carelessness or incompetency, commits a crime against society. She believes that he

has no right to shirk a disagreeable duty because it is disagreeable; or because he is lazy, or because it is pleasant to be popular, and to appear amiable to the outside world. She believes that executive people are the hinges upon which alone the world turns—creaking awfully sometimes, it is true, but, thank God! *turning!* not *rusting*. She believes in using the dictionary, and plenty of it, when people need waking up to their duty; and, this accomplished, she believes in laying it on the shelf till again called for. A wrong *un*-righted pains *Mrs.* Easy; rouses her fiery indignation. *Mr.* Easy is never quite sure it *is* wrong; and, till he is, it is not necessary, in his opinion, to clear the deck for action.

Now, I have no doubt that both styles of persons have their mission in the world, else they wouldn't be here: I have known wasps and snails each to have their admirers. Some day I'll write a book of fables for you, to which Æsop's shall be no circumstance.

I wonder is a man justified, to his own conscience or his Maker, in allowing himself to be so absorbed by "business," beyond what is necessary to the comfortable support of his family, that he is as much a stranger to his own wife and children as if he were only a boarder in the family,—bodily present indeed at two or three meals a day, but totally ignorant of the ponderosity of the domestic machinery, or at what cost of health, or mental and moral deterioration, to his wife, this unrelieved strain is being carried out from day to day.

Perhaps you will answer, Who is to decide what *is* "a necessary and comfortable support for a family"? I can only ask, if there is not a great wrong unredressed, when a man knows nothing of the different mental or moral characteristics of the children he has launched into a world of temptation and trial, and is also quite content to remain ignorant. I think all intelligent, thinking persons will agree on this point. Also when a man, professional or other, seldom or never addresses a word to his wife about anything but the family expenses, or his favorite mode of cooking any pet article of food. Sure I am that any wife who is not a hopeless idiot, will chafe under such treatment, until, at last, her fate being too much for her, mental and moral deterioration fairly set in, and she hopelessly revolves in her narrow bounds without even a desire that the children, once so dear to her, should ever peep over and beyond them. The friends whom she *might* and ought to have retained for herself and them, she has gradually, one by one, lost sight of; her husband being never at home to care whether they came or stayed away—his interests, and his friends, being quite separate and apart. Meantime his house shines, his meals are well prepared, and his "buttons" are in place.

This picture is not overdrawn. I can produce you its counterparts any hour in the twenty-four. By and by, the oldest boy outgrows pinafores and jackets, and steps round in long-tails. No father has been at hand, to point out the quicksands he should have avoided, or to encourage him by his sympathy or love to do right. But the devil in all his Protean shapes *has* been at his elbow, delighted at that father's indifference.

Presently some wild oat sown, brings to that home, as yet *publicly* undisgraced, its full-grown harvest of shame. *Now* come storms of reproach, under which the loving mother weeps and cowers, as if *she*, God help her! were guilty. Alas! and alas! were such young wayward feet *ever* turned right by such injudiciousness and injustice? Does not that boy *know* that it is the disgrace alone that father feels, and not the shipwreck of his child's soul? Does that father say, even to himself, "Oh, Absalom! my son! my son!" Not at all: he feels only a blind rage, a vexatious thwarting and hindering of his own affairs, which *his son* has brought about.

"*His* son?"

It is about the first time he ever regarded him in that relationship.

There is another kind of father and husband, quite the antipodes of this. *He* devotes himself entirely to the domestic side of the question. He has no "business" to occupy him, nor does he desire to have. He loves his wife devotedly, and the more children he has the better he is pleased. Their mother and themselves are enveloped in a warm atmosphere of love. Never was a harsh, pettish, or fretful word heard from his amiable lips. He plays with the children all day; he fixes kites and balls without stint for them; he tends the baby; and when a crisis comes, and the maid-of-all-work disappears, discouraged at the eleventh baby, he washes the dishes, if need be, as serenely as if he were born to it. Meantime these really bright children, loving and loved, grow apace. The mother is growing old. Love is a good thing, but there is a far-off questioning look in her gentle eyes, vainly searching those children's future. *Her* hands are now helplessly tied, and she sees no *outward* tendency toward business in his. She "loves him"—how can she help it?—*thus far*; but the years move on so quickly, and her children grow so tall! She remembers sadly the advantages of education *she* had, as she looks into the fair faces of her girls. Ah! how long will she continue to "love" their father? And how will those children, in after years, gauge that "love" which placed such obstacles between them and their best advancement? At what point in their young lives will they, chafing, let go the irresolute hand, that could only lead them up and down that narrow garden-path, when the broad highway of development lay in sight, and untrodden?

I am fully persuaded that if *even I* had created human beings, I couldn't have improved upon the original programme. I used to think that I should like to sweep the whole pussy-cat tribe of my fellow-creatures out of existence, with one wave of my wand. I am convinced now, that as a means of grace, they had better remain. Their sublime indifference as to the period in which the most momentous questions are to be settled, is instructive to hurricane natures. The fatalistic way in which they subside into their own comfortable chimney-corner, while all the moral elements are in a wild tornado outside, is calming to the spirit. The placidity with which they can eat, and sleep, and drink, and be merry, side by side with the corpses of dead hopes and abortive projects, over which humanity stands weeping and wringing her hands, is as good as a dose of opium. We look at them, and, wiping the cold perspiration from our

brow, we ask, Is it possible, then, that we have been lashing ourselves into all this fury, when there is *really* to be no shipwreck? *Are* we really on the high road to lunacy without knowing it, and in the near proximity to such sublime self-poise and calmness? We slink into our corner to reflect; and get that much breathing-time and wind to go at the demon again. So you see they are of use, as I told you.

Then there are your critical people, like John Randolph, who actually stopped his dying, to correct the pronunciation of a friend who was waiting to close his eyes. So they will stop you in the midst of a ravishing bit of poetry, or the narration of a story, to dissect the sentiment of it by some glaring Drummond light, that they keep remorselessly on hand for such purposes, while you, poor wretch, dropped suddenly from your sublime height, lose both your place and your temper.

Now you can't say this isn't educational.

Then there is your human chameleon, who takes its color from the last leaf it feeds on. You quote one of its yesterday-expressed opinions, with full assurance of faith, as exactly coinciding with your own. Up comes a third party, and demands how you can so misrepresent the chameleon's views, because that very day it expressed a totally different opinion to this third party. You ask the chameleon for an explanation; when it coolly informs you that consistency is the vice of little minds; and that to unsay to-day what you said yesterday, is a proof of progress. You retire with a muttered wish that the chameleon would furnish you with a pair of seven-league boots, with which to overtake his "progress."

Then there is that social wasp, "I told you so;" who, vulture-like, hovers over the fallen, ready to insert his cruel beak at any sore place one has made, tripping. The guillotine is nothing to the bits of quivering flesh *he* tears out.

Then there is your routine person, who sneezes precisely at six, and sits down precisely at seven, and rises precisely at eight, and looks out of the window precisely at nine, and keeps this up month after month, and year after year, without the shadow of turning, and in the teeth of imperative exigencies, and with a stony stoicism, and pettiness of purpose, which is exasperating enough to bring on a fit of apoplexy in the beholder.

Nobody can say that this is not equal to any authorized penance in the church, to the sufferer, whose blood has not turned to milk and water. In fact, I have often wondered why our Roman Catholic friends, who have so many excellencies, need trouble themselves to suggest or appoint anything of the kind, when life is so full of crosses and discipline in the raw. When it is so teeming with cross-purposes, that every person you meet seems obstinately bent either upon forming a partnership which, like oil and water, will forever be opposed to mingling, or throwing pebble after pebble into some ocean, expecting that the little circle it makes, will reach to the farthest shore of worldly fame or ambition. In fact, when I have visited lunatic asylums, it has really seemed to me that mad as their inmates undoubtedly are, there is little need to dissever them from their comrades on the outside.

You will perceive from this that I consider life a discipline. *I do.* No response was ever heartier. When one bubble after another bursts, this, you see, is a comforting reflection to settle down upon. There was once a man who read the lists of deaths every day, hoping to see that of some woman, the whole sisterhood of whom he hated. When he came to one, he always exclaimed, "Thank God, there's another of 'em gone!" My moral is obvious.

Commend me to the person who can say No with a will, when it is needed; who is not deterred from it for fear of being called "disagreeable," or "being thought to be always in hot water." Any water but lukewarm water for me! One of my favorite passages in the Good Book is this: "I would that thou wert either cold or hot; but because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." The joke comes in here: that your timid conservative is always the first to raise the signal of distress on any emergency for the speedy arrival of "that disagreeable person who is always in hot water." He likes him marvellously as such crises of his existence? Now, beyond dispute, everybody likes to travel on a smooth-beaten road without jolting, if possible; but in order for this, somebody must make a great turn-over generally, in clearing away the stones that obstruct it. Now, I consider it a cowardly piece of business for either man or woman, to travel miles around that road, rather than take hold and do their fair share of the disagreeable work, either from indolence, or from fear that they might offend one who might possibly prefer that the road should remain in its normal condition. Oh, how glad they are when somebody else has taken this troublesome pioneership off their shoulders! How they rub their lazy hands, and smirk, and say, "You see *you* do these things *so* well! I never was constituted for it"! Which translated, means, that they prefer sacrificing a principle to sacrificing their ease or popularity; as if anybody liked to keep all the time fighting—as if other people didn't love ease too!

"A GOOD MISTRESS ALWAYS MAKES A GOOD SERVANT."

OW I beg leave to place a very sizable interrogation-point just here; at any rate, until I receive an intelligible definition of "a good mistress." A servant's definition of one, in these days, is, "A lady who never comes down-stairs, poking her nose into things;" one who never is so "mean" as to calculate the time that elapses since the last batch of tea, coffee, sugar, or flour was bought, and the possibility, when these stores run short of their proper limit, that they have not been applied wholly to the use of the family. "A good mistress," to their idea, is one who is totally oblivious as to the time the gas is turned off at night, in the lower part of the house, or whether, indeed, it is turned off at all, or how many superfluous burners are constantly swelling up the gas-bill, where one would answer the purpose. "A good mistress," in servants' parlance, is one who scorns to look after any amount of chicken, or turkey, or beef, which may not be all eaten the first time it is set upon the table, and who will cheerfully purchase steaks for breakfast instead. "A good mistress," with many of them, is one who, beside paying good wages, gives them half-worn clothes enough to enable them to spend their money in other directions, and who yet is willing that these clothes should be worn only when they go out visiting, while they are constantly untidy at work.

"A good mistress," with the master of the house, is one who is just the reverse of all this. She is one who is constantly fighting waste and unnecessary outlay, and stupidity, and ignorance, and obstinacy, and impertinence, and unthrift. She is one who, with a constant panorama of Bridgets, and Betseys, and Marys, and Sallys, through her lower domains, at the expense of her own strength, and patience, and temper, and brain, and with no prospect of an end to the same until intelligence-offices contain more intelligence, is yet perfectly seraphic at the idea of being at the head of a training-school for servants, the remainder of her natural life; and smiles constantly at the same time under reminders of the necessity of greater economy in the household department. This is the husband's idea of "a good mistress."

Now I maintain that, with the present *average* material, ever so good a mistress, with the best intelligence and intentions, cannot "make a good servant." *Passable* they may be; but not "*good*."

The truth is—*brain* is wanted to make a good servant; and at present there is only muscle. Hence our gas is half turned off. Hence our water is wholly turned *on*, till a flood comes. Hence bits of stick and string and dirt are thrown into pipes—for the benefit of the plumber, and the depletion of our pockets. Hence the devil is to pay generally, till the distracted good lady of the house considers it the last drop in the bucket, when "her Sam" or John is unreasonable enough to expect her, with such brainless material, to present him with workmanlike results.

In America, the word "servant" is hateful to them; they much prefer the word "domestic" to express the same idea. Every servant in America, with few exceptions, dresses to suit herself; and a very bad thing she generally makes of it. Some few families insist on the muslin cap for their "nurses," and the regulation black dress and white apron. But this dress is obnoxious to the majority of servants; nor do I, for one, blame them for it. A most excellent colored woman, in a family of my acquaintance, whose Northern mistress had purchased her freedom before the war, and who was beloved by every member of the family, refused to wear the colored turban-handkerchief at request of her mistress, who had a taste for the picturesque in costume, saying, with much spirit, "I cannot do it, madam,—not even for you;—it is hateful to me; it is the badge of the servitude I suffered so much under." Of course, she was excused.

Now I can understand why so few servants, in this country, white or black, are willing to wear anything that bears the interpretation of "a livery." At the same time, there is hardly a housekeeper or mistress in the land who is not annoyed by the big hoop, and the long dress, which knocks over articles, and catches in doors, and trips up the unlucky wearer in doing her housework, or waiting on table.

Of course, if she understood managing her crinoline as she moved about, as does her "mistress," these things might not happen; but she does not; and it is the biggest and stiffest that she can find that she generally prefers and wears. This is unfortunate for another reason; because it often exposes dilapidated and soiled underclothing, and a very questionable state of shoe and stocking. That her mistress, though cleanly, often dresses in questionable taste, both as regards the adaptability of her dress to the state of her husband's purse, and the artistic selection of colors, does not make these glaring mistakes of her servants less palpable, or less injurious to the servant's morality; for where the passion for show, joined to narrow means, effaces that of decency and cleanliness, the downward road to ruin, for a woman in any station, is already entered upon. It needs only a very slight impetus to determine the final result.

Alas! the showy bonnet and gay dress, which must be had by cook or chamber-maid, although they have not a decent change of underclothing, or a whole pair of stockings, a warm shawl, or a pair of India-rubbers, or the least hint of flannel for cold weather! Now, they "have a right," as they say, so to expend their wages, if they choose. They have a right also to languish on a hospital bed, among strangers, when sickness and poverty overtake them. *But is it wise?*

In England, the dress of servants has not hitherto, as I understand it, been a matter of choice to them. I know of an English lady who, not long since, forbade her nurse to wear a dress, which the latter had purchased, because it was like that which one of her own children wore. Servants, in England, have leaped over this form of restriction, it would seem. Among the "reforms" now proposed, there is one respecting domestic servants, whose extravagance in dress, whose depravity of

morals, and unreliability of conduct is, they say, becoming "unendurable." A clergyman's wife has started a reform movement, and calls upon the ladies of England to help her carry it out. She proposes "that no servant, under pain of dismissal, shall wear flowers, feathers, brooches, buckles, or clasps, ear-rings, lockets, neck-ribbons, velvets, kid gloves, parasols, sashes, jackets, or trimming of any kind, on dresses, and, above all, no *crinoline*. No pads to be worn, or frizettes, or chignons, or hair ribbons. The dress is to be gored, and made just to touch the ground, and the hair to be drawn closely to the head, under a round, white cap, without trimming of any kind. The same system of dress is recommended for Sunday-school girls, school-mistresses, church-singers, and *the lower orders generally*." I think "the Sunday-school girls, church-singers, school-mistresses, *and lower orders," in America, generally*, would have to undergo a most wonderful *peeling*, according to this programme! I think an American "servant" would scarcely be content to be deprived of her "parasol," of a hot Sunday, when she went to church.

No, no, ladies; that's not the way to do it; not even in England, where flunkeys abound. The "lower orders" are waking up there, thank God! and I hope, to their best interests. True, it is mournful to see all a servant's wages on her head, in the shape of a gay dress-bonnet. I hate it; but I hate it for her own sake, because she needs so many comfortable things that the sum so expended would buy. And I hate, just as much, to see her mistress in a velvet cloak, which represents all her husband's earnings for one month, while there is a shabby carpet on her front entry or chamber, and "nicked" cups and saucers on her table. In fact, I think, that while the *parlor* sets so bad an example, the *kitchen* will never be swept with a clean broom.

THE MOTHER-TOUCH.

OW soon the house shows its absence! How little the lack of her executive watchfulness is realized till, like her plants that droop for want of water, everything about the house has somehow a wilted look! For was it not "mother" who moved about, instinctively placing a bright-colored vase just where the light would most effectually fall on it, and raised a curtain, or drew it aside, from the same artistic impulse?—who opened a window here or closed it there, just at the right moment, to make the temperature of the house agreeable?—who, passing into one room, straightened a cloth that was ever so little awry upon the table, or put out of the way some carelessly placed footstool, over which some stranger foot might have stumbled; or put sofas and chairs in such neighborly and comfortable proximity, that it was really quite wonderful how they could help carrying on a conversation with each other?

Was it not "mother," who, seating herself at the table, saw on the instant if the proper geographical positions of the dishes were respected? And did she not, how weary soever with her frittering life of detail, see to it that the unities were harmoniously preserved, in spite of Erin's unteachable proclivities to the contrary, and all with a glance of her eye, or a whispered word, or a touch of her magic finger-tips?

And the children! The button is never missing at the throat of the little garment, where insidious croup essays to creep in. The tiny mittens are nicely mended, and no shoulder-strap is so tight as to impede motion or cut the tender skin, till the justly irritated child gets a boxed ear at school, which should by right have been administered to the person who planned and put on its abominable clothes—ruffled, mayhap, and embroidered, but ill-fitting, and rasping as the hair-cloth shirt of the devotee. And who but "mother" remembers whether "that poor child ate any breakfast this morning," or needs the intervening and comforting bit of bread and butter, for lack of which, again, its ears are unjustly boxed at school? And does she not plan her "shopping" and "calling," so that when the little ones come back from school or play, the house may not seem empty, who else soever may be there, because "*mother*" is out? No little nose in *her* house is flattened on the window-pane, hour after hour, watching for the presence, which alone fills the house with sunshine—settles all grievances, or else kisses them away; and always for the tired little feet substitutes soft slippers in lieu of the heavy boots. And who, at night, bathes the heated forehead and flushed face, and cools off the little hands before they are folded to say, "Now I lay me," and leaves a kiss on lips that falter with sleep at the last unsaid syllable, for it may be that in this world it will never be finished. "Mother" thinks of that.

And now, "*mother*" is "gone"! Oh, how much is in that little word? There is a "body" down-stairs, but that soon will go too. For the grown people it leaves behind, there may be solace, but, alas for the little child, who cannot comprehend why, when

mother is "down-stairs," she can at the same time be "gone"!—who knows not how, from that narrow grave, she can "get up" to the far heaven, where they say she had flown. Alas for the little child who now is overloaded with clothing when it is warm, and has on far too little when it is needed; who goes hungry when food is imperative, and is overfed when digestion clamors for a respite; who breathes all night an already exhausted atmosphere, and sits perhaps in a deadly draught next morning! The little child who touches "mother's" work-box, and "mother's" desk, and "mother's" dresses, but never can find *her!* who goes to sleep with a sigh in place of a smile, and wakes up to a lonely house though filled with voices! In all the wide world there is never so empty a spot as that little heart.

And what a void is left when it is the little one who goes! "Say something to comfort you for the loss of your little one." This is what you asked of me. Nothing I could say *now*, my friend, would comfort you, because you are stunned, and must have time to lift your head and look about you. *Then* you will see myriads of little graves beside your own darling's, and myriads of mothers who have passed through the same Gethsemane, where you are now weeping tears of blood. Each of those mothers has cried out like yourself, "What sorrow was ever equal to my sorrow?" What is that to me? you ask. Listen. Many of these mothers are now thanking God, every day of their lives, that their little ones are safe from the fearful earthly storms that have since come with desolating sweep over their hearthstones. Humbly they say, "Ah! I little knew, though my Maker did, when he folded my baby safely to His protecting breast, what was in the future." Well, some day *you* too will cease to weep—growing unselfish—and reaching forth further each day your supplicating hands towards that heavenly home where there shall be "no more death." Having your treasure there, there will be your heart also. Said a sweet young mother to me, "Once I used to cry always, at twilight, that I must some day die. Now that my baby is gone, death has no terrors for me, for there I shall be happy with her again—and *forever*."

Let those who can, rob her of this her beautiful faith. When the sun shines only on the graves wept over by *others*, they can stand erect and say, "This world is good enough for me. I don't want any better." But see, if with the first falling clod on some dear, cold, still breast, "*My* God!" will not come as involuntarily to their lips as "Mother!" to the little child's, when pain overtakes it away from her protecting side.

The shining lock, the little shoe—my friend, it is long years since I shed a tear over mine—I can take them out of their wrappings in my hand, and smile to think that I am so far on my journey that I shall soon see my little one face to face. *Whether she or I will be the child* when we meet again, God only knows; or, what heavenly mysteries I shall learn, kneeling at my baby's feet, I cannot tell; but this I know, by the kisses I have given many a little face since she died, for *her* dear sake, that a mother's love was meant to reach far beyond the grave.

The bits of conversation one hears in the street, are often very suggestive. Said a gentleman the other day: "It appears to me, that the women of to-day are excellent in every department, but that of *wives*." It occurred to us, that if this were true, what a comment it was on the stupidity and bad management of the general husband. If in every other relation of life, woman does excellently well, why should she not do well in *this*?

SOME GOSSIP ABOUT MYSELF.

IRST—my unfortunate NOSE! I think life would be a different thing to me had I no nose. When you consider that there are twenty disagreeable odors to one sweet one, you will be at no loss to understand my meaning; and yet, after all, when we come to definitions, your *pleasant* smell might be a very noisome one to me. Your tobacco, sir, for instance; or your "patchoule," madam, or your musk. Then turnips, or cabbage, in process of cooking, may not cause *you* to throw up—the window! Beefsteak smoke, or mutton-chop smoke, or buckwheat-cake smoke, may render *you* quite happy in prospect, while I only sigh for that far-off millennium when cooking shall be inodorous. Stay! I meant to except coffee. Hail coffee—*rain* coffee, if you will. Ah! I would keep a perpetual pot of coffee steaming on my kitchen range. Tea smells nice and tastes well, I suppose, to its lovers, for whom I have little respect. In truth, when I reflect how my nose curtails my daily bill of fare, I am lost in wonder, and my butcher no doubt also marvels at its monotony. The whole family of *Frys*, for instance, except a gentleman I once knew of that name, are odious to my olfactories.

In the millennium I speak of, no cook will allow a bone to be singed on the fire, or milk to boil over upon the stove; for let her know that up three, four, yea, five pair of stairs, I shall immediately be apprised of the same by this my watchful member. Let her not dream that her cousin, or uncle, or male "follower" of any degree, can smoke, or even light his pipe, in the kitchen, without giving me an impulse toward the bell-wire. Let no grocer boy or ice-man fondly hope to retain the celestial spark, while he briefly deposits his wares in my kitchen; and if Terence O'Flaherty thinks he can shovel coal into my cellar and smoke at the same time, although I may be knee-deep in an "article" at the top of the house, Terence has reckoned without his host-ess.

I know you are sorry for me. I am sorry for myself, because it is obvious that forty times a day I must suffer nasal crucifixion. I get a comfortable seat in church, or concert-room, or lecture-hall. In comes Apollo, and sits down at my elbow, in that close, unventilated place, and finishes the process of strangulation, with dead tobacco smoke in his clothes and hair. I am quite willing some other lady should admire him.

But there is a bright side to this nose question. I defy you, who don't mind tobacco, or the odor of a cooking cabbage, which is much the same thing, to revel in a rose, or violet, or lily, or a sprig of heliotrope, or mignonette, as I shall. I defy you to go into a wood after a rain, and detect, as I shall, every delicate and individual odor; from the scores of little unseen flowers hiding away under roots of trees, and in patches of moss, and in crevices of old gray rocks. *There*—I have the better of you, for that too brief heaven.

Alas! I am very unfortunate. There are my *ears*, too. The squeaking of a door, the drumming of idle fingers on a table, or tapping of idle feet on the floor, the scraping of a knife on a bad pencil-point, the clipping of one's finger-nails with

scissors, the continuous biting of an apple in my presence, the humming of the same idle tune, the sharp winding of a clock or watch—I fear you will cease to respect me when I say that I have meditated murder in "the first degree" for the perpetrators thereof.

If it is any palliation of my crime that I am cold from head to foot when I hear sweet music; or that the trill of a little bird sends a tear to my eyes and a prayer to my lips, I confess also to this weakness. I am quite willing, too, you should ask, as does Mr. Smith, fifty times a week, "Fanny do you think there ever *was* a woman born into the world exactly like *you*?" whatever condemnation that question may imply for me or—the rest of my sex.

It is said that a certain great statesman, owed much of his popularity to the fact, that he never forgot the *name* of a person out of the thousands who had been presented to him, and would always in shaking hands say, "I recollect you perfectly; I saw you in such a year, at such a place, on such an occasion." Of course, his constitutent, from the village of Frogtown, was immensely flattered, and went home satisfied that there must be something remarkable about him, which he had never before found out, that he had made so indelible an impression on so great a man, with such a press of public care and business; and didn't this statesman get *his* constitutent's votes and good words after that?

Now it is very certain *I* never should do for a statesman, notwithstanding my very palpable qualifications apart from this. I—who persisted for months in calling Mr. Smith Mr. De Peyster although little pieces of flesh were nipped out of my arms by dismayed friends, and my toes were trodden on, till there was great danger I should be crippled for life.

But my last hope was shivered the other day, upon reading, in a public print, that not only was a person unfit for society, who could not remember the *names* of those to whom he had been presented, but that if he had failed to pronounce that name in the manner the happy owner of it preferred, it was a mark of low-breeding.

Well, if it has come to that, the question is what is to become of me? I have done my best, when I am pulled and twitched, to bow and smile in the direction indicated; but it is a miserable failure. I know it. I *always* look the wrong way; I frown at my best friends, and smile idiotically—to order—on Shem, Ham, and Japheth. I hand a ten-dollar bill to pay for twenty-five cents' worth of hair-pins, and go out forgetting my change. I go into the next store, and make a purchase of a stranger, and depart without alluding in any way to the remuneration: and when he follows me to the door and meekly inquires my name and address, I ask him with the dignity becoming a wife and matron and a grandmother, what business that is of *his*? Last week it rained, and I left my domicile with an umbrella in *each* hand. Yesterday I went out with only one India-rubber shoe on, and feeling cold in the neglected foot, remarked to my companion that I thought one of my India-rubbers must have a hole in it to let in the water so badly. It is very trying to listen, at such a crisis, to the

indignant and oft-repeated query, "*Are* you going mad?" but I have to endure it, and, what is worse, I have the sorrowful consciousness of deserving it.

What troubles me most is, whether I am to pay six cents for car-fare and ten cents for omnibus, or six cents for car and five for omnibus. Also, what that gentleman thought of me who was polite enough to hand up my fare, when, upon presenting me the change, I told him that I had no occasion for charity. I think the driver was to blame there, in allowing ten minutes to elapse before making change, during which I sunk into my customary stupor.

It is useless to enumerate the gloves I have worn in public places, where the curious spectacle has been presented by the glare of gas-light, of one *black* hand and one *green* one; and, more marvellous still, when this aberration has been intensified by both green and black for the *same* hand.

I have requested my "keepers," when my madness reaches indisputable lunacy, to pad the walls of my room, and turn the key on me there, instead of transferring me to a Lunatic Asylum; where my superior and unapproachable idiocy would so excite the envy of the other inmates, that my life might be the forfeit. In the meantime, any of my friends who are shedding salt tears that I have not noticed them, or if any who are *not* friends are bristling with indignation because I *have*, are requested, one and all, to pity my unhappy condition and pass me by.

The solution of all this is, that I have a new book in press. That the *proofs* of the same are sent to snarl me up late in the evening, just before I go to sleep. That beside this, I am writing—well, you'll see what, by and by. That I have had sickness in the house for six weeks. That I am house-keeper. That I have scores of letters to read and answer; and that I have a little duck of a grandchild, who every hour or two wants me "to tell her a story that is *new* and *true*." Am I excused?

Shall I relate my first theft? Well, I had bought a new muff; that is nothing surprising in a city where women trim their dresses with diamonds. But there is a story to that muff. With a wholesome horror of *female* shoplifters, I had attached to it a silk cord, which I could pass over my neck; thus placing beyond their reach the temptation to appropriate it, should I lay it down temporarily on some counter, while shopping. Thus armed, I went forth.

Well, as I say, thus armed, I went out to buy some little matters needed in my household. After paying for them, I took a muff from the counter before me, placed my hands in it, and pursued my journey. I had not proceeded more than a block, before a bare-headed clerk came rushing after me, jostling the crowd on either side, and placing his hands as I thought very familiarly on my muff, took it from me, remarking as he did so, "By your leave, madam," and disappeared with it, instanter. I looked about me for a policeman, when just then my hand became entangled in the string around my neck. Good heavens! I had then taken some other lady's muff from the counter! I had walked out with *two* muffs. One about my neck, one in my hands. I did not pursue my search for that policeman. I was also seized with such a violent fit

of laughter at the ludicrousness and novelty of my position, that I was quite incapable of locomotion.

Just then I met a lady friend, to whom I told the story, as well as my frequent bursts of merriment permitted. She looked as solemn as a hearse; she said sepulchrally, "How *can* you laugh? I should have died with mortification." And the more solemn she looked the more I laughed, and I haven't done laughing yet, although it was three days ago. I am at present looking for the finale—viz., my picture in the Rogue's Gallery as an accomplished female shoplifter. I may have stolen other things, but, upon my word, this is the first time I ever stole a muff. It was so comical, that if a station-house had been my portion I know I should have laughed all the same; besides, I always wanted to see a station-house. I might possibly have preferred riding there *in a carriage*, if the policeman in attendance had no objection, or if the walking was bad, or it stormed!

Finally, my brethren, a correspondent inquires how I look? Am I tall? have I dark, or light complexion? and what color are my eyes?

I should be very happy to answer these questions, did I know myself. I proceed to explain why I cannot tell whether "I be I."

First—one evening I was seated at the opera, waiting patiently for the performances to begin. In two orchestra chairs, directly in front of me, sat a lady and gentleman, both utter strangers to me. Said the *gentleman* to his companion, "Do you see the lady who has just entered yonder box?" pointing, as he did so, to the gallery; "well, that is FANNY FERN."—"You know her, then?" asked the lady.—"Intimately," replied this strange gentleman—"*intimately*. Observe how expensively she is dressed. See those diamonds, and that lace! Well, I assure you, that every cent she has ever earned by her writings goes straightway upon her back." Naturally desiring to know how I did look, I used my opera-glass. The lady was tall, handsome, graceful, and beautifully dressed. The gentleman who accompanied me began to grow red in the face, at the statement of my "intimate" acquaintance, and insisted on a word with him; but the fun was too good to be spoiled, and the game too insignificant to hunt; so, in hope of farther revelations, I laughingly observed my "double" during the evening, who looked as I have just described, for your benefit.

Again—in a list of pictures announced to be sold lately, was one labelled "Fanny Fern." Having lost curiosity concerning that lady myself, I did not go on a tour of inspection; but a gentleman friend of mine who did, came back in high glee at the manner in which the purchaser thereof, if any should be found, would be swindled—as "I was *not* I" in that case either.

Some time ago "Fanny Fern" was peddled round California, or at least, so I was informed by letter. In this instance they had given her, by way of variety, black eyes and hair, and a brunette complexion. I think she was also taken smiling. A friend, moreover, informed me that he had seen me, with an angelic expression, seated upon

a rosy cloud, with wings at my back. This last fact touched me. Wings are what I sigh for. It was too cruel a mockery.

You will see from the above, how impossible it is, for such a chameleon female, to describe herself, even to one "who likes my writings." If it will throw any light on the subject, however, I will inform you that a man who got into my parlor under cover of "New-Year's calls," after breathlessly inspecting me, remarked, "Well, now, I *am* agreeably disappointed! I thought from the way you *writ*, that you were a great six-footer of a woman, with snapping black eyes and a big waist, and I *am* pleased to find you looking so soft and so femi*nine*!"

I would have preferred, had I been consulted, that he should have omitted the word "soft;" but after the experiences narrated above, this was a trifle.

A gentleman requested me not long since "to rebuke those men who did not rise, when ladies entered a car, and give them a seat." Now this would come with a bad grace from me, for the reason that I never enter a full car without having this politeness extended to me. But mind this, ladies, I never yet forgot to thank the man, as prettily as my knowledge of such things serves me, for such a gracious act, and perhaps that is the explanation. At any rate, I have been so disgusted with the reverse, that I more often wondered that men *do* get up, than that they *don't*. I think ladies, too, should not *exact* such courtesy by look, or word, or manner, as I have often seen them do. I find American men most courteous, most obliging to our sex. Now and then one meets a bear. To such, a woman must of course give a wide berth, unless she has a muzzle in the shape of a "protector" handy.

HOSPITALITY.

F each person were asked to define this word, the answers would be amusing. Emerson says "that we should not turn away wholly from the routine of our daily life to make our guests welcome." He says "that every one worthy to sit at our table knows that life has its necessary duties; and that we should not burden our friends with the thought that our business is suffering derangement and loss by their coming."

This is common-sense; but if we measure the majority of people by it, then few "*are* worthy to sit at one's table." It may be because insincerity is so much the order of the day, that each so distrusts the other that a person cannot say frankly to a friend, without giving offence, I would be glad to stay longer with you, or have you stay longer, but I really cannot now. A lady said to me, not long since, "I never dare say truthfully that I am 'engaged' when a caller comes, no matter how impossible circumstances make it for me to go down. If I do, it always offends. Therefore I am obliged to send word that I am out; then the caller leaves without any wound to his self-love." Now this ought not to be. A straightforward honesty is much better. But there are so many inconsiderate people, who, provided they gain their point to see you, care little at what sacrifice on your part of time, or at what postponement of imperative duties. *They* have time enough. So much that they are even puzzled what to do with it; how can it be that *you* have none, or so little, at the service of friends? They cannot comprehend that one's duty, or one's labor, may tread so closely on the heels of the other, that your remaining vitality needs the most careful nursing and division to keep your steps from *final* faltering. What is to be done with such rhinoceros-hided people as these? You feel no unkindness toward them; but, like the beggar that accosts you on the last of many curb-stones, you have simply parted with all your pennies. Your pocket is empty.

I recollect once a lady in the same house with me, to whom I apologized as civilly as I knew how for being obliged to leave her to write a promised article. She bowed coolly, and, on my leaving the room, said to a friend of mine, "I suppose she did that to get rid of me, don't you?"

It is much easier to get along with men, because *they* can understand that life has its unpostponable duties, without any lifting of eyebrows or incredulous shrugging of shoulders, or a cool salute the next time you two meet. The intercourse of one man with another in this regard has always elicited my admiration. They take up a newspaper or a book, and read in each other's presence, with a tacit understanding of its perfect propriety. If one has to leave, he often says no more than "I'm off," or "Good-by, old fellow." Sometimes it is only a touch of the hat, or a hand laid on the other's shoulder in passing; and no black eyes follow, no locks of hair fly, nor do any hard words or looks result in the future.

If ladies smoked,—which the gods forbid!—do you suppose one lady would allow another to stop her in the street and light a cigar from her lips, when she *never was introduced*? When she didn't even know who her dress-maker was, or where she bought her bonnets? Good heavens!

Did you ever notice, if anything unexpected occurs in the mutual path of men through the same street, how naturally and frankly they accost each other, though perfect strangers, and converse about it, and go their several ways, to their tombstones, after it. Not so sweet woman! Catch *her* speaking to "that nasty thing"! How does *she* know who or what she is?

Children are so delicious about these matters. I saw two little girls the other day trying to crack a nut upon the sidewalk, by pressing in turn their tiny little shoes upon it. Despairing of success, they said to a gentleman passing, "Man, man, crack this nut for us, will you?" His handsome face was luminous with fun, as he pressed his polished boot down upon it, to the delight of the youngsters and myself. Now these little girls wouldn't have thought of asking a lady to do that, or if they had, do you think she would have stopped to do it?

WOMAN AND HER WATCH.

HIS unnatural partnership is well understood, both by watchmakers and husbands. Who among the latter has not had occasion to mourn, seventy times seven, that he was ever such an idiot as to present his wife with a watch? Of what use was it, when fastening it to her belt, in its pristine glitter and correctness, that he remarked, with uplifted finger, "Here, my dear, be sure and remember to wind this up regularly every night when you take it off." Of what use was it that she bristled up, and retorted, "As if I shouldn't remember that, John, you goose!"

Didn't John himself, after she crept into bed, that very night, ask her had she done it; and didn't she guiltily reply, dodging the question, "Don't bother me, John, just as I am getting sleepy!" And didn't it run down? And didn't he face her up, the next day, with the face of that watch behind time, at the same moment showing her reproachfully the immaculate time-piece in his vest-pocket, which never erred, or varied from the path of strict duty, no more than one of his relatives! And wasn't she glad, when a pickpocket in a street-car, shortly after, relieved her husband of this finger-post to her transgressions! Besides, suppose her watch were a little before or behind time, or suppose it stopped altogether, for the matter of that; wasn't it *her* watch, I'd like to know; and didn't his jurisdiction over it stop when it became such? And didn't she, at last, get so mad at his asking her every night, when they got into bed, if it was wound up, that she let it alone from sheer perversity, and never pretended to prevaricate on the subject, but "riz" right up in bed, when he asked her the question, and answered boldly, "No, it isn't!"

And how impertinent it was of the watchmaker, when, after frequent aberrations from duty, she carried secretly this little trinket to get it repaired, to ask what she had been doing to it; or to laugh, with *his* necessary knowledge of watches and women, when she replied, "I only dropped it on the hearth." But watchmakers are often husbands—and when you've seen one husband, you've seen the whole tribe—always asking you what you've done, and then scolding you for doing it; thus offering you a premium for lying the next time they propose such a meddling question.

Do they tell "what they have been doing"? I rather think there'd be pulling of hair if they did. Then what right have they to catechize us?

Now I ask any candid person if a lady's watch don't *look* just as prettily in her belt, whether it "goes" or not? And can't she always ask her husband what time it is? And isn't he a brute and a bear, if he growls at telling her, even supposing he has given her a watch to obviate that necessity? I'm sure nothing could be plainer; and I hope nobody will say, after this, that a woman can't reason. Besides, what right has a lazy animal like man to expect anything perpetually to "go"? Don't *he* lay off, on every convenient chance? Isn't he always prefacing and winding up everything with "Be quiet"? Of course he is. Every wife from Maine to Florida knows that. I tell you

they expect too much from women and their watches, and it's high "time" they knew it, and got used to having both run like fury one minute, and stand still the next.

Will people who attend lectures and concerts cease drumming with their fingers on the back of seats, or with canes or feet on the floor, till the services begin? One cannot help remarking, in such vicinity, how few persons are really well-bred. Dress certainly is no indication of it, judged by this rule. If a tattoo must be performed, why not go out in the lobby or vestibule, and have the war-dance out? This thing has come to be such an intolerable nuisance, that the paradoxical regulation, "No *gentlemen* are allowed to smoke in the ladies' cabin," may as well be imitated by—"No *gentleman*, in a concert or lecture-room, is allowed to drum on the back of a lady's chair before, or after, or during the entertainment."

"MY DOCTOR."

OU have one, of course; and of course he never opens his mouth without dropping pearls. (I hope the printer will not print this last word *pills*.) *Your* doctor believes in flannel next the skin, all the year round. Mrs. Jones' doctor, who "knows much more than your doctor," thinks that a person of discretion may occasionally, in the dog-days, lay flannel on the shelf and no coffin be imminent. *Your* doctor says that young children's necks and shoulders should always be covered, even in warm weather. Mrs. Smith's doctor, who, she says, "stands at the head of his profession" says that is all nonsense, and that children should go through a toughening process, which will render changes of temperature harmless. *Your* doctor advises you never to cross the street, or go down-stairs, unless accompanied by quinine. Mrs. Smith's doctor tells her if she wants poison she had better get ratsbane, and then she will know what she is swallowing.

Now each of you believe that "*my* doctor" is infallible; that is a great comfort to you, and very satisfactory to them, especially pocket-wise. "My doctor" hasn't dealt with women so long, and failed to see their blind side. He knows what "brutes" husbands are, and how like flints they will oppose the sea-shore, merely because their wives want to go there. What is the use of "my doctor," unless he comforts you under this affliction, and declares that to be the only place where you can regain your lost appetite? No wonder you like him; no wonder life is a blank to you when his carriage is not before your door. There is healing in the very sight of his beard and moustache; and how much handsomer they are than the "brute's." Ah! had you met "my doctor" years ago, you say; not stopping to reflect, that in that case he would have been attending women who paid fees, and left you, his wife, to some medical friend for pills and consolation. It is better as it is, you see. Well, it *is* comforting "that he understands you better than anybody else, and seems to know just what you want." And then he shows such an absorbing interest in your symptoms, that you almost feel cured by his sympathy alone, before you swallow a single powder; and, since my ears are out of your reach, I will remark, that well you may, when, half the time, nothing in the world ails you but the want of some absorbing occupation or interest. Colored water and bread pills are safe prescriptions for that complaint; meantime it wont hurt the "brute" to pay for the wear and tear of the doctor's carriage in coming and going. If "my doctor" laughs in his sleeve, occasionally, when he thinks what funny creatures women are, you are none the wiser or the angrier for it. He don't dislike, after all, their little cuddlesome, trusting, confiding ways; possibly not so much as his wife does, whose acquaintance you had better not make. As I before remarked, his medical friends can take care of her; it is no business of yours, her disgusting ails and aches.

But what a thing it is when "my doctor" was also "*ma's doctor*"! If he don't know all the ins and outs, then "may the divel fly away wid—him!"

The moral of all this is, that "my doctor's" life is not without its consolations, and the most astonishing part of it is, that husbands are so blear-eyed to this subject. It wont harm them to hint that in sympathy and courteousness they had better not present too sharp a contrast to "my doctor."

A WOMAN AT A LECTURE.

F you want to see a woman act more like a goose than she need, watch her when she enters a place of public performance, where the seats are at the mercy of first-comers. Notice her profound survey of the situation, as she stands, preceding her John, who is supposed to know nothing about such things, poised on one foot, while she measures distances, drafts, and acoustics with the eye of a connoisseur. Now she decides! At last she swoops down on *the* seat in all the house which she prefers. John follows, with the shawl and family umbrella. He faintly suggests the possible obstruction of a pillar between the seat she has chosen and the speaker, but he follows. Directly she is seated, and the shawl and umbrella located without inconvenience to themselves, or infringement of the comfort of their neighbors, when she coolly remarks, "John, 'tis true, that pillar *is* right between me and the speaker." John's ears redden; but he is in public, so he don't say, "Didn't I tell you so?" but rises with shawl and umbrella, the former catching by the fringe on every seat as he passes, and the latter slipping to the floor while he tries to disentangle the shawl. Meantime my lady is on her triumphal march for that "best seat."

Now she alights! It wont do. There's a tall man in front of her; she is always fated to sit behind a tall man. She tries another; there's the phantom pillar again. Yet another; that's the end seat, and every horrid man that comes along will be treading on her dress and knocking her bonnet over her eyes all the evening. Meantime John gets redder in the face; he can't even ease himself with a customary growl. Ah! now she has got the seat at last, and stands beckoning to John to follow. Her friend Miss Frizzle is beside her, and she is happy. There is only one seat, to be sure, but "John can find one somewhere else, or perhaps he would like to take a walk outside and call for her when lecture is over—only he must be sure to be back in time." So down she sits, while John wanders off for a possible stray seat. Now she draws off the glove that hides her one diamond ring, and settles the bracelet on the wrist of that hand. Then she tumbles up her front hair, lest it might have got smooth coming. Then she picks out the bows of the natty little ribbon under her dimpled chin. It was that chin that victimized John! Then she draws from her pocket her scented pocket-handkerchief and gives it a little incense-waft into the air, magnetizing a young man in front, who turns round to find the owner of that delicious gale from Araby the blest. Then she takes out her opera-glass and peeps about, not so much that her sight is defective, but that her diamond-ring and gold bracelets gleam prettily in the operation. John, meantime, has found a seat in a draft, and is sitting with bent brows and a turned-up coat-collar—which last is sufficient to make a ruffian of a man without any woman's help—in the back part of the house. Confidences, millinery, mantua-makery, and matinée-y are meanwhile exchanged between his wife and dear Miss Frizzle, who is

an acknowledged man-killer, and keeps a private grave-yard of her own for deceased lovers.

Now the lecturer rises. "Pooh! he's an ugly man. Well, they need't look at him; and perhaps he'll be funny—who knows?" He isn't funny. He is talking about Plato and Epictetus; who the goodness are they? But there's an end to all things, and so there is to the lecture. Now, John is wanted, and, to tell the truth, for the first time thought of! Ah, there he is! but how sulky, and how ugly he looks with his coat-collar turned up! He might have some regard to appearances when he goes with *her*. People will think she has such a horrid taste in husbands.

"Why don't you talk?" says the little woman, when they get outside. "It was too bad you couldn't sit by me, John; I missed you so! but, you see, there was but one seat."—"Not just in that locality, I suppose," muttered John. But the street-lamp just then shone on that cunning little dimpled chin, and its owner said, coaxingly, "O-o-h, now, John! don't be cross with its little wife!" and it's my private opinion he wasn't. Would you have been, sir?

CAN'T BE SUITED.

OOK at those long-faced Christians coming home from church, says Find-Fault; "it is enough to make one sick—gloomy, morose-looking beings. I wonder do they think there is any religion in that? The fact is, religion is played out." Now, Find-Fault *wants* religion to be played out, so he looks at it always through that pair of spectacles. If he sees a mistake in that direction, he never thinks, as in other cases, of making reasonable allowance for it. He can understand how really good men may have narrow views of business, or of politics, or of any such secular matters; but if they blunder through narrowness of view on the *religious* question, he immediately sets them down as hypocrites and pretenders. Now I believe that there is many a "Worthy the Lamb" being sung heartily in heaven to-day, by those mistaken Christians who thought it right to groan and sigh all the time they were on earth. It is a pity, to be sure, especially in view of such people as Find-Fault, that they had not occasionally given us a cheerful chirp before they went, but "religion" still lives all the same.

Then Find-Fault is not very consistent, even on his own showing.

"*There's* a pretty minister for you," he says, as he comes out of the Rev. Mr. Spring-morning's church; "there's a pretty minister for you—making his congregation smile during the services! A clergyman shouldn't let himself down that way. It is undignified." You tell him that the clergyman in question believes in a cheerful religion, and wishes to do away with the long-faced Christianity which brings religion into disrepute with just such people as himself. Finding himself in a corner, he only gives you his stereotyped answer, that "religion is played out, anyhow."

Find-Fault isn't a bad man: it only pleases him to be thought so. The other day, in speaking of a man who made great efforts to overcome intemperate habits, and failed, he said, "Poor fellow! somebody ought to take hold and help him to help himself." But, mind you, he never thinks of applying the same rule to a church-member for whom Satan, in a moment of weakness, is too strong; no matter how sincere his repentance, he only says, "*there's your religion again!*"

Not long since, when a man of very bad character was requested by church-members and clergymen to give up his disreputable way of living, Find-Fault said, "Now just see those Christians taking the bread out of that poor devil's mouth, and expecting him to sustain nature on praying and singing."

Afterward, when a purse was made up for just such a person, that he might be able to defy want, and the better to struggle for honesty, Find-Fault remarked, sneeringly, "Reform, indeed! what fellow like that *wouldn't* reform, even fifty times a year, if the bait of a well-filled purse were put under his nose."

Now what is the use of talking to a man who applies common sense to every subject but that of religion?—who has no doubt that genuine money is in circulation

although he has a counterfeit dollar in his pocket, but still persists in denying the existence of true religion because he sometimes meets a hypocrite. Oh, pshaw! None so blind as they who *wont* see. None so hard to convince as they who are predetermined *not* to be convinced, come what will.

Would it not be well for the sextons of our churches, to take the *creak* out of their Sunday shoes, by wearing them once or twice on a week-day? Some of the most important points in a clergyman's discourse are often lost through the music of the sexton's shoes. A pair of soft slippers, or easy boots, might be raised on subscription and presented to this functionary. Also, if he would not go out in the vestibule to smoke, during service, it would be a relief to many lovers of pure air. Both these suggestions apply equally well to some of the parishioners.

AUTOGRAPH-HUNTERS.

F there is an intolerable nuisance, it is your persistent autograph-hunter—your man or woman who keeps a stereotyped formula of compliment on hand, "their collection not complete without your distinguished name," &c.; sending it all over the country, to eminent and *notorious* individuals alike, to swell their precious "collection," as they call it. Now, in the outset, I wish to except requests for this purpose from personal friends, to whom it is always a pleasure to say Yes; but to those who torment you from mercenary motives or from mere curiosity, as they would bottle up an odd insect for their shelf, to amuse an idle hour, I confess to little sympathy. Nay more, I am unprincipled enough, having long been a martyr, always to pocket the stamp they send, and throw the request in the waste-paper basket. I can conceive that invalids, or very young school-boys or girls, might amuse themselves in this manner; but how a sane adult, in the rush and hurry and turmoil of the maelstrom-life of 1868, can find a moment for such nonsense, or can expect *you* to find a moment for it, is beyond my comprehension. Now, a lock of hair has some significance—at least, I hope that man thought so, who received from me a curl clipped from a poodle-dog, which at this moment may be labelled with my name. It will be all the same a hundred years hence, as I remarked when I forwarded it to him.

Your autograph-hunter has a funny way of acknowledging "the intrusion," and then going on to pile up the agony by asking, beside your own autograph, that you would "favor him with any from distinguished individuals that you may happen to have in your possession, for which he—or she—will be much obliged," etc.; and I have no doubt they will when I send them!

Now, I know this sounds unamiable; but there is a point when endurance comes to an end, and that is where persistent impertinence begins. Why don't they go to my friend Jack Smith? *He* is eminent. He will write autographs all day and all night for anybody who wants one, because he considers it a compliment, which I don't, as autographs go; and because Henry Clay never refused—and that would be the very reason I should; and because Jack has the chronic weakness of always saying Yes, when he should say No, and *vice versa*. I am afraid I shall have to buy my postage-stamps after this onslaught, instead of having them found by autograph-hunters, as I have had for some time; but I shall get off cheaply at that, and save temper, time, and ink beside. The mischief of expressing one's opinion on this and kindred subjects, in print, is this: that the rhinoceros-fellows you mean to hit always dodge it, in favor of some kind-hearted, sensitive soul whose feelings you wouldn't wound for a bushel of autographs, though you should have to sit up all night to write them. I didn't mean *you* at all, my dear sir or madam, because I know *you* really like me, good-for-nothing as I am; and, after all, it may be that I am only "riled" by that "furniture-polish man," who looked so much like a clergyman that Betty mistook him for one, and

thought I really must go down if I were busy, and whose nose I should like to have anointed with his miserable "polish," for wasting one good hour of the morning, trying it on my furniture.

THE ETIQUETTE OF HOTEL PIAZZAS.

AM not aware that any one has treated this momentous subject. This being the case, permit me to inquire what are the rights of persons occupying rooms on the ground-floors of hotels, or boarding-houses, with windows opening upon the piazzas of the same. Or, in other words, *have* they any exclusive right to that part of the piazza directly fronting their own windows? May they remonstrate if, while sitting at their window reading or writing, a person draws a chair in front and commences singing "Pop goes the Weasel," with variations; or whistles "Yankee Doodle," for an hour; or *reads aloud* to a companion some blood-and-thunder novel? Or worse, when a gentleman(?) draws a chair in front of the window, and with his heels on the pillar of the piazza, and his head close to your window, lights an odious pipe, and commences filling your room with its vileness, compelling your immediate retreat, because he prefers the spot opposite to your window to the smoker's end of the piazza: in such case, is it in order for one to request his speedy exit? Is it piazza-etiquette for strangers, who have ascertained "that that is *her* room" to lean close to the window-sill, the better to observe the habits of the animal inside? May one, in such circumstances, in self-defence, close a blind, or drop a curtain, without forfeiting the good opinion of inquiring minds?

Would it be proper, in those who engage piazza-rooms, first to inquire of the landlord if he himself is a smoker, the better to calculate one's chances of sympathy in case of tobacco intruders?

There are alleviations, I am not unaware, to the occupants of piazza-rooms. For instance, when one's blinds are closed upon the unwary, it is interesting to hear a narrative of oneself from the stranger within the gates. Many facts in your history, of which you were before entirely ignorant, are thus brought to your notice, without subscribing to any paper. It is also edifying to learn that your friend, "Mrs. Jones, gives her husband fits;" that "Mr. Smith is a horrible brute, in his own room, to his wife, although always ready to pick up gracefully the handkerchief of any other lady, and return it with the most complimentary little speeches." It is also amusing to know that Mrs. Jenkins' hair is or is not her own; likewise, her complexion. Edifying, also, are statistics about family expenses, and the manner of expending holiday money so as to get the most fun out of it. But when one young man reposes love-confidences in another, beneath your lattice, *then*, my sisters, hold your breath and your sides!—for then shall you know a depth of stupidity in measuring feminine tactics which should richly entitle its owner to a free pass into any Lunatic Asylum in the land.

As this is a many-sided subject, let me inquire, were you, the occupant of a piazza-room, ever awakened at the gray dawn, from lovely slumber, by the dragging of chairs and stools across it, and the scratching of mops and brooms? Or were you ever forced to lie in a perspiration of agony, at twelve o'clock at night, while some

enterprising individual, in the parlor opposite your door, played with one hand, the inspiring tune of "Lanigan's Ball," or rattled discordantly through "I love but Thee"?

Lest you should forget it, let me repeat the question with which I started. Have occupants of piazza-rooms any exclusive rights in the piece of piazza directly fronting their own windows? If Congress has not adjourned, perhaps it will stop pulling noses to answer.

OLD STOCKBRIDGE IN MASSACHUSETTS.

ASSACHUSETTS forever! *and thrift, of course*. Doors that will shut. Blinds that will fasten. Windows that do not dislocate your wrists to open. Good bread and beef steak. Mountains with cool sloping sides, and distracting shadows. A river that has coquetted with the meadows, till one never knows where it will turn up, or disappear. Perfect roads, even for our precious "Ledger-horses." Trees whose tops pierce the clouds, with trunks as rugged and gnarled as the theology of the oldest divine in the place. "Stockbridge!" The name might have been prettier—the place *couldn't* be. From my window I can watch the cool spray of a fountain, as the wind tosses it about, or the sun makes a rainbow out of it. Or I can look at a little toy of an Episcopal Church, half hidden in vines, and trees, and roses, through whose open windows floats faintly to my ear the sweet Sabbath chaunt, to which the little birds give cheerful response. Bars of sunlight lie across the wide grassy road, and every door is a picture, with the silver hair of age serenely biding its time; or the golden locks of childhood, shading sinless brows, spite of the "hell" which President Edwards would insist was their inherited portion. In *this* place, too, of all other places, where heavenly peace is written in the air, and so faint is the intimation of life's turmoil, that one might well doubt whether this were *not* heaven. I look at the house where this good, but *I* think mistaken, man thought and wrote these things, and wonder that he could not see *my* God instead of *his—the Avenger*.

I walk under these cathedral trees, and like a dream comes to me the memory of a bright summer day, when a romping school-girl in Pittsfield, near by, I came to this very "Stockbridge," to a house a few rods from my present abode, where a sister's welcome awaited me. And to-day *her* trees, *her* vines, *her* flowers, give out perfume, and shade, and bloom, all the same as if she were gliding in and out beneath them, instead of sleeping, deaf, dumb, and blind, forever to all their beauty.

You, too, must have known those whom you "could not *make* dead!" Joyous, beaming creatures, with steps of air, floating *over*—not walking *on*—the earth; touching everything with brightness, like the bright-winged birds, which send forth a trill that takes your soul along with it, as they dart, like a gleam of sunshine, through the air. *You*, too, have stood over their coffin; but you only remember the sunny *living* face. You have touched the cold hand; but you feel only, through long years of separation, the warm life clasp. And so my sister was still there, amid her flowers and trees; and when the present kindly proprietor showed me about the house and grounds, it was *she* to whom I listened; it was *she*, not him, whom I followed, through the well-remembered paths.

And now tread softly, lest you invade the sanctity of yonder Indian burying-ground, where rest the bones of countless chiefs, whose descendants make annual pilgrimage to the spot, unmarked, save by the wild flowers and waving grass. These

Indians went by the name of "The Stockbridge Indians;" and when any of their tribe settled afterward in any other place, they always insisted on naming it "Stockbridge." Jonathan Edwards, who was driven from his church in Northampton on a point of doctrine, was the minister employed by the Government to Christianize them; and, from all accounts, a hard job he found it. "The poor Indian" must have passed into his "hunting-ground," for I meet him nowhere in my twilight walks through his earthly haunts; nor does the ghost of a single chief cause my hair to stand on end as I pass, by moonlight, their lonely burying-ground.

MORNING IN THE VILLAGE.—Softly, slowly, the white mist-veil is drawn back from the cool, green mountains. Now a little bird, raising its bright head from its nest, sends forth such a welcome to the fragrant new-born day, that prayer of mine seems superfluous and tame beside it. Follows another, like a well-trained voice in a choir, till at last the swelling chorus is complete, and nature's matins have fairly begun.

How the dew sparkles and trembles on the nodding blades of grass! How lazily the cows loiter on their shady path to the cool pastures! How fair look the white daisies and red clover, fresh from their dewy baths! How still hang the leaves on the trees, as if to enjoy the too evanescent coolness! Now some little child's sweet voice is heard, rivaling the birds. There she stands in the doorway, prettier with her uncombed locks and bare little pink feet peeping from beneath her loose, white night-dress, than any touch of art could make her. And now her father, brown and strong, with hoe and rake in hand, goes forth to his day's work, stopping as he goes to rest his toil-hardened hand lightly on that little head as he passes it. And whether the hot noonday sun or the swift lightning-stroke shall paralyze it, that soft touch, through the slow-coming years, shall be her talisman. And now the village is fairly astir. None are left in their beds—none are idle, save the old or the sick. The smoke of the rushing cars curls out from yonder willows that fringe the river's brink, then disappears, as, with a parting screech and puff, the train rushes forth on its errand of life or—death! Now groups gather round the "store" and "post-office." Ladies who have travelled thither, *with the city on their backs*, are sauntering under the trees, so occupied with taking care of their dry-goods that they have neither eyes nor ears for the beauty and harmony around them. What right have such women to perpetuate themselves? How *dare* they be mothers? I don't know.

NOON IN THE VILLAGE.—How white and hot lies the sun on the dusty road! The slow, patient oxen are scarce discernible through the cloud they raise with their huge feet. Their driver has pushed his coarse straw hat aside, and is mopping his brown face zealously as he mercifully gives them breath under the shadow of that grand oak-tree. The voices of the children and the birds are hushed this garish noon. Each have taken refuge in their nests, to doze the laggard hours away. The fine city ladies are in loose dresses, deciding whether brown, or green, or blue shall make us tear each other's eyes out with envy at dinner. Their husbands lie under the trees in white raiment, insulting high Heaven with pipes and segars. *Africa* is flying around in

the dining-hall, regardless of the thermometer, counting spoons, knives, and noses. Babies afflicted with last night's mosquito-bites howl at their nurses with distorted faces, while their bigger brothers and sisters screech for "a drink of *wutter*." Mammas ejaculate "Merciful heavens!" and keep on surveying their back-hair with the aid of two looking-glasses. Wonderful beings are women; but don't fear I shall turn state's-evidence! Not till I can turn female Robinson Crusoe, with my "man-Friday," to back me in case of onslaught from the savages.

EVENING IN THE VILLAGE.—Little Bobby stands on the piazza, dressed in his *fifth* white robe and sash, since the amorous sun kissed the tears from nature's face, this blessed morning. Poor Bobby! His temper isn't improved by it; and as to his nurse, were it not for her "wages," she would like to fricassee Bobby. Poor wretch! but just wait till Bobby and his mamma are safe in bed. Wont *she* enjoy her freedom in a pink neck-ribbon, flirting by moonlight with Tom—the head-waiter? So would *you*. I don't blame her. You and I haven't the monopoly of moonlight; although, 'tis true, they might phrase their vows more grammatically; and if they *could* make up their minds not to kiss so loud under my window, I should sleep better of nights. As the sun declines, how lovely lie the purple shadows on the grateful coolness. Ladies are driving past, smiling, and prodigal of sweet words to the husbands of—*their friends! Their* husbands are similarly occupied. "Fair exchange is no robbery," saith the proverb. Smith used to like black hair, when he married his Belinda; but since he saw Jones' wife with her blonde locks tied with a blue ribbon he is a penitent man. Belinda don't care—Mrs. Jones' husband has "such a way with him!" On they dash!—it's none of my business, as Mischief remarks, when she has winked and blinked a reputation down. I don't pretend to be more charitable than my betters. Now those of us who believe that hoofs should not always be a substitute for human feet, stroll forth for our evening walk. We are not afraid of dew or dust, and we get miles away before we remember that we have to return. We sit on the fences, and dangle our boots, and watch the mountain shadows and the soft white mist creeping over the valleys, and we listen to the whip-poor-will. Or we boldly walk up the avenue, under the dense shade of the trees, to the lovely lawn in front of that big house, and admire the gardener's skill as displayed in the vivid patches of bloom nestled in the grass. Or we cross the meadow—to the tell-tale willows, behind which the river hides, and listen to its peaceful flow; and say for the thousandth time, that we *will* own "a place" in the country; but, nevertheless, it is ten to one, that next summer will find us staring at the "place" of somebody else, and allowing him the privilege of keeping it in order for us, and settling the bills for the same. Alas! that the tools with which scribblers work can be sharpened and kept from rusting only on that grindstone—*the city*.

SUNDAY IN THE VILLAGE.

AM New England born. I want a hymn and a prayer on Sunday. Not that I do not like both, on other days; but I am always homesick without them on Sunday. I want them *in church*, too. I said I wanted a hymn and a prayer. I want a sermon, too; but, alas! I am so often disappointed *there*, and I so dread being disappointed, that I generally take a seat near the door, where I can leave at the precise point when I feel happy, and the sermon begins.

This is naughty, I know, but as I have gone into the confessional, I will make a clean "*shrive*" of it. I want *what* I want so much, and the lack of it spoils my Sunday. I want to know *how to live*; and the Rev. —— only tells me that I've "got to die." I want to know how to manage with *to-day*; and the Rev. —— only speculates about what may or what may not be in eternity. I want to be soothed, and helped, and propped, and comforted; and the Rev. —— tries to scare me with an "angry God," and a "sure damnation." I want earnestness in the pulpit; and instead, I find the Rev. —— drawling lazily, "And the LUD GED said unto Adam." I want to know what the Rev. —— is talking about; instead—half of the time, I am convinced—he don't even know that himself.

Perhaps these reasons may be some excuse for my dodging the "sermon" occasionally; if not, I plead guilty, and only ask you to acquit me of intentional irreverence. It still remains that who else soever can do without their Sunday, it is not I—Fanny.

But that's not what I meant to speak about, only that you will insist on the "prelude" in church. I *meant* to tell you that the Sunday before I left New York, I had a genuine Sunday—one of *my* Sundays; when, on entering the church of the Rev. Dr. Hall, I did not exchange the sweet song of birds, the vivid green of the trees, or the blue of the fair skies, for sulphureous terrors. Since I heard Dr. Payson, of Portland, when he reached out pleading hands to win wayward feet into the path of life, I have never been so entirely satisfied with the delivery of the Master's message. Dr. Hall has the same dignity; the same pleading earnestness; the same deep, rich voice; the same appreciative way of reading the hymns; the same *heart*-tone in every syllable. With him it is no performance. No person present could fail to feel that he had come there that morning as a fond parent would go forth, full of tender love, and yearning for the child who had strayed from home. There was no narrowness, no bigotry, no uncharitable denunciation; and, at the same time, no blinking of the truth—and the *whole* truth. It was the lovely spirit of the Crucified: "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do."

I had a full meal; and if you could have gone away unsatisfied, I am sorry for you. It must be that you never had a heart-wrench; that you never reached out imploring hands in the darkness, only to grasp the empty air. It must be that the earth

never opened at your feet, and swallowed up your dear ones. It must be that you never—with a sincere desire to do right, by yourself, and by others—found yourself choking with distressful tears, that each day's sun should go down with so poor a record. Oh, you never could have felt thus, or you could not have gone away from the sound of Dr. Hall's voice, and said, there was nothing there for me. At least I think you would have admired, as I did, his noble frankness in telling "church-members" that he did not blame outsiders for doubting their Christianity, when they were so swift to pronounce judgment on those who differed from them in opinion. "This is bigotry," said he; "this is fanaticism—it is not Christianity. Man's conscience was not given him for this—it was given him to scrutinize his own shortcomings." This pleased me, in contrast with the opinion held by many "Christians," that the faults of such should never be spoken of, "for the possible harm to the cause."

Now, in conclusion, I would say to Dr. Hall's church, that to allow a clergyman like him to preach in a place so badly ventilated as was that church the morning I was present, is a crime. Let them show their regard for him, while thronging there to hear him, by not killing him by inches; he is too tall a man to die in that way.

WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN IT MAKE WHAT I DO OR SAY?—Now, there is not a man or woman living, nor ever has been, to whom it "makes no difference." If you have neither father, mother, brother, sister, child, husband, or wife, in the wide world, still there is some neighbor, some companion, whose eye, fixed upon you, is moved, perhaps unknown to themselves, for good or for evil. You slip an arm through theirs, in the crowded thoroughfare, or lay a friendly hand on their shoulder, and, in a leisure moment, saunter along together. *Where?* It was *you* who decided *where*. It is on you that the responsibility falls, perhaps, of that friend's *first* downward step. Never say, it "makes no difference what I do." It makes a difference to *yourself*, even were it true that it did to no one else.

They who have passed many milestones on the journey of life, with their faces toward the Celestial City, do not stop to ask those who pass them on the road, of their creeds or nationalities. They see only the brother, or sister, to whom the helping hand and sympathizing word in time may be life or death for this world and the next. This is the true Christ-spirit.

SICK IN THE VILLAGE.

HAVE been sick; safe under the coverlet for seven or eight days at least. I mention what may be to you but a very ordinary experience, because I am really quite humiliated: first, that such an unusual thing should have occurred to me; and secondly, that it should have been the undeserved penalty of great amiability on my part. It happened lately that, on a certain public occasion, a seat was politely assigned me near the orator of the hour, and, unfortunately, also near an open window, through which came directly upon my throat a blast of chill air. I felt it clutch me, but I said to myself, I wont make a disturbance leaving. Hence the necessity of a doctor, and a total cessation of speech, and a big bunch, the size of an egg, on a throat which were better without it. The next time I am polite, you may tell me of it! I am out now, to be sure, under the trees again, but I can't walk with any spring or unction. I can't eat with any appetite. I can't ride without being sensible of every inequality in the road. I hate a bed so that I can scarce bring my mind to get into one at night, and yet I am, as the expression goes, "*dead tired*" all the time. I tell you all this, particularly now, however, because I have received a stack of letters, during this period, which I must take a little time to answer, and which correspondents might otherwise suppose were never received, or had been slighted. But, oh! how beautiful look the green fields to me, now, and how welcome the fresh air! Still, don't come to Stockbridge *to be sick*. It is heaven for well people, and kind friends who dwell here are heavenly in kind deeds, at such and all other times.

This is what ails Stockbridge. It is occupied, mainly, by rich people, who come here only for their summer sojourn. Most of the houses here are quite closed in winter; therefore, you see that they are all consumers: *producers* are the exceptions. If you have fruit or squashes in your own garden, thank the sun and the Lord for the same. If you don't own a garden, and don't want to tire out the generosity of your friends; in short, if you are a sick pilgrim at a hotel, then more's the pity. *Then* you'll lie on your pillow and dream of big peaches, and luscious pears, and plums, in your native hunting-ground, the New York markets. You'll think of the stores in Broadway, where huge bunches of grapes, in purple bloom, lie clustering. Maybe at the butcher's, near your very door in New York, is the "sweet-bread," which, if cooked at the right moment, and in the right way, might tempt your flagging appetite. Heaven's blessings on the good Samaritans who brought *me* nice tit-bits; but one don't want to be a pauper too long, lest the patience of benevolence might give out.

While I lay sick, I must say a peach-tree seemed more desirable than the grandest elm; and a pear-tree preferable to ever so magnificent a maple or chestnut. Grape-vines, also, I thought finer than woodbine, ivy, or clematis; in short—were my state of invalidism to continue, I am confident I should become a confirmed utilitarian.

If this bit of experience of mine is any comfort to the forced sojourner in the hot city, let him hug it to heart. I have had sunsets here like the glory of "the New Jerusalem." I've wandered under these trees and been driven over these lovely roads, till my eyes were moist with happiness I could not voice. I have heard such kindly tones, and seen such loving faces, and been so hospitably entreated here, that it would take more physic than was involved in those bed-ridden days of pain and unrest to give me a grudge against lovely, mountain-girdled Stockbridge.

MEN AND THEIR CLOTHES.

HE female fashions of to-day are absurd enough; but if anything more absurd than a man's "stove-pipe hat" was ever invented, I would like to see it. Mark its victims, when they remove it from their heads—which they seldom do, the gods know why, unless they are getting into bed; see the red rim across their foreheads, produced by its unwieldy weight, and unnecessary inches up in the air; see them occasionally in the street, giving it a cock backwards, when nobody but apple-women are looking, to observe how quickly a gentleman, by that action, may be made into a rowdy; then see them apply their handkerchiefs to their foreheads, to cool off the heat and the pain, and then with a stoicism worthy of one of Fox's martyrs, replace it, and bear the long agony till they get home. Then what garment that ever woman wore, is more ridiculous than a man's shirt, whether buttoning before or buttoning behind, or disfigured with puerile "studs;" whether the stiff collar stands up like a picket on guard, or lays over, with a necktie to tie it suffocatingly over the jugular vein.

Then mark that abomination—a swallow-tailed coat. Heavens! how ugly the handsomest man may look in it! and woe for the plain men, when they intensify their plainness with it!

Then see the knock-kneed and the crooked-legged advertising their deformity in tight pantaloons; and short, fat, barrel men wearing little boys' cloth caps on their heads! Ah, for every female goose that Fashion makes, I will find you a male mate, even to the wearing of tight corsets!

But, my friends, on one point there's a difference. "When a fashionable lady engages a female servant, she stipulates that she shall wear a cap on her head, and calico on her back, to mark the difference between herself and that servant—without which, I suppose, it would not often be recognizable." When her *husband* gives a dinner, the male waiters are dressed exactly like himself—in festal white neckties, white gloves, and hideous swallow-tailed coats.

How is this? It must be that the male creature is very secure of his position, socially, mentally, morally, and physically, to permit such presumption—nay, to demand it. Can any philosopher explain to me this mystery? I was "struck 'midships" with the idea at a festal gathering not long since; and turning to my male guide, philosopher, and friend, asked what it meant. His irritating answer to this most proper and natural question was, "Fanny, don't be silly."

I reiterate my remark that men's dress is to the full as absurd in its way as women's, and I am only reconciled to the idea that a man was intended for a human being when I see an athlete of a gymnast, of glorious chest and calves, and splendid muscular arms, skimming the air as gracefully as a bird, and as poetically; then I know how civilization has ruined him! I know, that man if he jumped, and ran, and wrestled, and walked, instead of sitting stupidly in a chair in the house, or creeping

into an omnibus when out of it, and smoking and going to sleep in the intervals, would not be obliged to creep into these ugly tailor's padded fashions to hide his deficiencies, but could wear what he chose, knowing that the beautiful outlines of his form would glorify any decent vestment.

I walked several blocks out of my way behind a man, the other day, who positively "stepped off." What a chest he had! what a splendid poise of the head! what a free, jubilant swing of the arm! I hope he will come to New York again some day, for I'm sure he was a stranger to it, for he neither stopped anywhere to take a drink, buy a cigar, nor did he hail an omnibus!

Magnificent giant! I wonder what was his name, and had he a mother. If not—well, it was a pity he shouldn't have.

I wonder what *are* "good manners"? The question occurred to me the other evening in a place of public amusement. I was one of a dozen or so of ladies, wedged in a row of the usual narrow seats. At every pause in the performance, three *gentlemen* stepped over the laps of the ladies in that seat, carrying off in their exit, or knocking upon the floor, opera-glasses, fans, scarfs, handkerchiefs, and, almost, the ladies themselves; returning each time wiping their lips, and introducing with them a strong odious smell of tobacco. I respectfully submit to any *real* gentleman who reads this article, if that is "good manners."

Of course, I know it would be better if all seats at such places could be so arranged that *gentlemen* need not clean their boots on ladies' laps in order to pass out. But also it would be well if gentlemen took all the sustenance in the way of wine which they needed before starting from home; and if they *could* also bring their godlike minds, to defer smoking till they could annoy only the one lady, whom they have a legal right to annoy, it would add to the general comfort, as well as their *public* reputation for gallantry and politeness. Men generally object to going out evenings, "because they are so tired." Why, then, they never embrace the opportunity to sit still when they get there, is an inconsistency which we must place unsolved, on the shelf already so well labelled with them. I might suggest also, that if they will persist in cleaning their boots on our laps, in order to get out these narrow sets of seats, and if they will carry off in their exit our gloves and fans and opera-glasses, and if they will keep on repeating this little pastime all the evening, to say nothing of occasionally crushing our feet out of all shape, I would venture to suggest that they should mitigate the suffering by saying, occasionally, "I beg pardon," or, "Pray excuse me," or by some such little deference acknowledge the infinite bore of their presence.

Failing in this, I propose that each *gentleman*, on his return, should bring in his hand a peace-offering to the ladies in the seat, of a glass of lemonade and a bit of cake. Why shouldn't *we* be thirsty too? Mr. Beecher says a woman has a right to—no, I believe he *didn't* say that, but he ought to have done so; and if he didn't, "fair play is a jewel."

Mr. Smith exclaims, on reading this, "Horrible woman!" because, though a handsome man, he sees himself looking selfish and ugly in the glass I hold up to him. Now, Mr. Smith wouldn't say that, if he should sit down beside me and let me talk to him five minutes. Not he! You see I have him at a great disadvantage, away off at the other end of the city or over to Brooklyn. I could say the very same things to him I have just said on paper, sitting here on my sofa beside me, and that man would go on lying, as men will, to other men's wives' faces, and be *so* polite and smiling, that his own wife never would know him, if she happened in; and he'd tell me that "what I said was all true, and that men *were* selfish animals," meaning Tom Jones and Sam Jenkins, and every other man but just himself. Don't I know them?

NOTES FROM PLYMOUTH ROCK.

OW I ever lived so many years in Boston without coming to see Plymouth, is one of the sins of omission for which I am at this present finding doing my best to atone. I trust all of you who are equally guilty, will come as soon as may be to breathe the fine Newport air of the place, and take time to visit its interesting coast, its numerous ponds, its lovely drives through odorous woods, and all the hallowed spots which ought to be dear to the heart of every true American. Don't go to Paris or London till you have been to Plymouth. It were well to "see Niagara" first; but it were better to have gone with me to the "Record Office" this morning, and seen the yellow manuscripts, covered thickly with the small German text-looking handwriting of our Pilgrim Fathers; setting forth, for instance, "the shares they severally held in a cow," in the simple, honest, straightforward manner of the time—one signed by "Myles Standish," who, it seems, having the primitive ambition to own an *entire* cow, kept buying up the shares of the rest as speedily as his means allowed. I thought of Mr. Bonner's stables, and the thousands of dollars his horses represented, and wondered how he dared to say his catechism! Then I saw their veritable "Charter," kept in a dark cupboard, with a silken curtain drawn across the precious signatures, lest the unscrupulous sunlight, invading this "Holy of Holies," should snatch them from posterity. And then and there was exploded for me the theory that handwriting is indicative of character. Certainly those effeminate, small, beautiful letters gave no sign or token of the moral strength, the rugged persistence of purpose, of the Pilgrim Fathers. Not one modern young lady in a hundred could write so minute and beautiful a hand. They must have had good eyesight in those days, when gas and furnaces were not. Sharp men they were; disguising the very graves of the first little Mayflower band, lest the Indians should take advantage of the reduction of their numbers. The very house I am in bears the name of the first Indian who visited them,—"Samoset." Whether the fair and tender-hearted Rose Standish quailed before the savage owner of this most musical name, I have not learned. I do not hesitate to say, that *I* should have made for the bushes on his first appearance. It is curious, in walking the streets of Plymouth, to hear the little children calling to each other, in their play, and using the old familiar Mayflower names of hundreds of years ago.

But Pilgrim ancestry does not insure saintliness in all its descendants, as I found upon visiting the county prison. Within its walls was pointed out to me a woman who had poisoned her husband, when sick and helpless on her hands. For thirteen long weary years she had never been outside those walls; and latterly had declined even walking in the little paved yard allowed the prisoners. She was a large, powerfully built woman, with a skin like the parchments I had been looking at in the Record Office drawn tightly over her high cheek-bones. She sat sewing at her grated window as we entered; and when asked "if she were not warm," as the day was very

hot, answered petulantly, "No—I am most always cold; there can't be circulation where there's no exercise." Outside was bloom and sunlight, and song of birds, and merry voices, and blue skies, and pleasant hum of labor, and the faint dirge of the sea. She merited her fate, but I turned away from her sick at heart, and thought, were it my case, how questionable were the mercy that abolished hanging for such slow-dropping torture as this.

In the same room with her were three hard-featured women, placed there for violation of the liquor laws. Each in that room had a babe in her arms, or at her knee—poor little innocent victims of maternal misdoing. One baby was moaning with the teething process, so hard to endure and survive, even with all the appliances of out-door air and wholesome surroundings. Its little waxen face showed signs of severe suffering, and for *three months* more, if the little life were spun out that long, it must remain there—its only amusement rocking the rude box which was allowed for a cradle. The mother answered me roughly enough when I inquired the age of her baby, but God knows I forgive her any bitterness she might feel at the difference that bright day in our respective lots; but could she have read my heart, and seen how I longed to carry her little one out on the grass, and among the flowers, and see it smile, she would have known me for its friend.

I never saw a prison more clean, and neat, and well-ordered; and yet I could not help thinking there should be a nursery there, that the little children of these erring mothers need not be punished with them; but, in the graphic language of the Superintendent, "Its original intention was *not* a fancy boarding-house."

I wish here to place on record that Plymouth can make good bread. I had begun to fear, so long had I been fed on Cape Ann saleratus, that I might lose the taste of wholesome yeast and flour, just as the "marasmus" denizens of the Five Points learn to dislike pure air. A brief heaven of good city bread in blessed old Boston quite set me up; and its unexpected appearance in Plymouth was more than I dared to hope.

I presume to this I may attribute the number of hale-looking, cheerful old people in Plymouth. I have no doubt it has had its effect also on the religious liberality so prevalent here, as I find that nobody *makes mouths* at you for being a Unitarian, or an Episcopalian, or of any other denomination that happens to suit your complaint. Rev. Mr. Robinson, the minister of the church in Holland from which "the Mayflower" Christians came, inculcated upon his flock this bit of pure gospel, in his parting sermon to them, that, "there was a great deal of truth coming out ahead that they had not even dreamed of as yet;" and particularly warned them against that spiritual conceit which should close their eyes to the perception of it. Now that's what I call liberal Christianity. Ministers, deacons, and the religious world generally will please take notice.

Since I came here, Plymouth has distinguished itself by a storm of rain and wind, the like of which I never saw before. I began to think over my transgressions; but really there were so many of them, and the house rocked so, and the trees swirled

round at such a furious rate, that I had no clear idea then, nor have I since, of their number or enormity. And the very next morning the sun shone out so brightly on uprooted trees and unroofed barns and tumble-down chimneys, and the flowers that from their lowliness had escaped the avenger, that I took heart of grace, and classed myself among the latter!

NO BEAUX ANYWHERE.

O beaux! Absolutely *no* beaux! Well, young ladies, stop and consider, if, after all, you yourselves have not pronounced the sentence of banishment.

We?—we "banish" them? Good gracious! Is it not for them we have devised all this elaboration of adornment? We, indeed! Were we not, for weeks, before we came to these odious mountains, where men are as scarce as French hair-dressers, closeted with our dress-makers and milliners to produce these bewitching "suits," long and short, for morning and evening, out-door and indoor wear? Have we not cool dresses and warm dresses; dresses for rain, dresses for sunshine, dresses for neutral weather, with ribbons, gloves, sashes, parasols, hats and fans to "match," to the minutest shade? For whom should we take all that trouble but for the beaux? And how are we responsible for their disgusting absence?

Listen, my dears, for in that which you have just said lies your offence. Can damsels thus arrayed walk in the woods, climb the mountains (except in poetry)? Can they take even an ordinary, mild walk, without mortal terror of perilling their millinery? Must they not, therefore, "ride," morning, afternoon, and evening, everywhere, to the delectation of stable-keepers, and the consequent pecuniary depletion of the "beaux"? These beaux, whose fathers may be rich, but whose sons have yet to fill their individual coffers; these beaux, who have just so much to expend when they get away for a summer holiday, and who do not desire to pour it *all* into the pockets of the stable-keepers; these beaux, who can get vastly more fun out of their purses, and make them last longer, with a party of "the fellows,"—this is the reason that, with rare exceptions, you have to throw away these ravishing toilettes on your own sex, when you play croquet, or sit on the piazza, dreaming of the "coming man."

My dears, he *wont* come! He knows too much. He has seen his sister's milliner and mantua-maker bills, and heard the family discussions thereon; and though he acknowledges your fascinations even through all the absurd toggery you are doomed by fashion's slavery to have and to wear, he has yet to make the fortune to enable him to foot his angel's bills. So he runs away from you, discreetly; runs off fishing, or gunning, with "the fellows," and, wiser than you, comes home brown, hale, and hearty for the winter months, instead of perspiring at your side in tight boots and yellow kids.

Do you begin to understand? Now, my dears, if you have been ushered into the world in a coach and six, till your feet and hands have become paralyzed for want of use, that's your *misfortune*, not your fault, because that necessitates a rich husband. And as there are very few rich *young* husbands, you will have to bid good-by to your girlish ideal, and marry the bald-headed, gouty Mr. Smith, who was born at the same time as your own father. This, my dears, you will have to do, or face your nightmare, *single blessedness*.

I have looked at you playing croquet, without a coat-tail among you; I have seen you driving yourselves out in your pretty little phaetons; and though you put a brave face on it, I know very well what is going on under that gay little sash of yours; and I think it is a pity that you should have been brought up to so many artificial wants, that your *heart* must go hungry in life's spring-time because of them.

My dears, *I* never lacked beaux at your age. But a walk in the woods, or in the city either, involved no expense to *my* beaux. I could climb a fence, where there was no gate, or where there *was* either; I was not afraid of dew, or rain, because my dress was simple. My gifts were not diamonds, but flowers, or books. *My* mother would not have allowed me to ride with gentlemen, had they asked me. When they came to spend an evening, our tray of refreshments did not involve a "French cook." So you see, my dears, though I had no silk dresses, I had plenty of beaux, and a gay heart; and I enjoyed a sail with an old sun-bonnet over my curls, or a moonlight ramble, with a merry party, much better than you do "the German;" and half an hour was sufficient warning for me "to dress" for any kind of a party—indoors or out—because, unlike you, I was not bothered to choose from twenty dresses which to wear; and I will give you leave to ask any of my beaux, who are now grandfathers, if I was not able at that time to settle *their* accounts! And it is because I had such a good time that I feel vexed that your youth and prettiness should so often go a-begging—through no fault of yours; and you may show this to your mothers and tell them I say so.

In the country, too, matrons, we have full trunks and absent husbands.

It was a quiet little village; just such a place as you, madam, with your six children, sensibly clad in calico, would like to have enjoyed the sweet summer days in. There was no "dress;" there were no "hops," in hot halls, by gas-light; there were no masquerade balls. Everybody was in bed by ten o'clock, save a few smokers, who profaned the sweet, odorous quiet with their vile tobacco fumes. There was plenty of driving through the bewitching roads, plenty of walking, *some* gossip,—*which I have ascertained has no sex*—some croquet-ing and crochetting, but no *coquetting*, because there was a great vacuum where beaux should be. Altogether, the city residents of Frog-ville were a sensible set.

But, alas! one unlucky day the shrieking cars landed at the door of the principal boarding-house a woman. That was not an event of itself, but this woman was accompanied by many trunks. Nobody knew whence she came, but conjecture was rife as to the contents of the trunks. Breakfast, next morning, solved the mystery. Mrs. Fire-Fly—for she was a Mrs.—none the less dangerous for that—on the contrary!—swept into the dining-hall in a train about six yards long. The train was white and spotless; the floor was not. The lady carried her coffee to her lips, with diamond girdled fingers, *steadily*, with an eye to her delicate ribbons. Scipio, who handed her beefsteak over her shoulder, had no time to consider such trifles. Little puddles of milk lay in wait on the floor for that spotless train, dexteriously coiled, by its owner, like an anaconda under the table. Pools of milk, tea-drippings, and bits of omelette,

dislodged from their moorings, by hot haste in serving, were dotted, here and there, in the path she would soon be called upon to mop on her exit. At *length* she rose! Her train followed at a respectful distance. The eyes of the dozen or two sensible women, clad in sensible raiment, followed that train. Its dainty owner, with a disdain of economy, born of many trunks, and their ample contents, did not so much as lift it with one of her jeweled fingers. On she swept, through the coffee-pools—through the gravy-drippings—through the milk-puddles, out into the hall.

The sensible women present looked after her spell-bound. Then they gazed into each other's eyes, and murmured, "Paris!" Alas! the serpent in fairest guise had entered the primitive Eden of Frog-ville. The sensible matrons looked now, through different spectacles, at their alpacas and calicoes. How mean in comparison! Their trimmings, how "dowdy"! The fit of their bodices, how awkward! Dinner-time came, with added newness and added splendors. Cobweb tissues, with frost-work trimmings, and train longer by two yards than the breakfast train. And such ribbons! And such jewelry! How tasteless was the beef that day; how disgusting the mutton; how prosaic their gingham-clad, rosy children; how tame and humdrum was life generally. And then, this dainty lady had "a maid." *They* had no "maids." They had never felt the need of a "maid" till now. How had they ever combed their tresses? How had they ever fastened their own dresses? Pshaw! their *dresses*! How unworthy the name—mere wrappers. Gracious! how miserable were these heretofore happy women. Never till now did they know how miserable they were. The dainty lady's husband, 'tis true, was not with her. She had to do without him; while they had theirs with them. *Her* husband was in the hot, smoky city, earning more money for more "Paris" dresses—that is, he was earning money during the day; what he did with his solitary evenings or nights, the dainty wife did not inquire. She was satisfied; she was brimming with content, that she alone, amid all these wives and mothers, had "Paris" dresses.

"I really must have some clothes," said one of the hitherto sensible matrons, "the next time I go into the country. I didn't know, till Mrs. Fire-Fly came, how very shabby was my wardrobe."

"I would rather," said a friend at her elbow, "that you, the healthy mother of six healthy daughters, should have said: 'I didn't know, till Mrs. Fire-Fly came, how sensible and befitting the country was my wardrobe; and how proper and right it was that my husband should be taking his rest in the country with me, instead of divorcing himself at the risk of our mutual peace, to furnish me with nine trunks full of Paris dresses.'"

"I have done nothing to-day but keep things straight in the house," you say wearily at the close of it. Do you call that nothing? Nothing that your children are healthy, and happy, and secured from evil influence? Nothing that neatness, and thrift,

and wholesome food follow the touch of your finger-tips? Nothing that beauty in place of ugliness meets the eye of the cheerful little ones, in the plants at your window, in the picture on the wall? Nothing that *home* to them means *home*, and will always do so, to the end of life, what vicissitudes soever that may involve? Oh, careworn mother! is all this nothing? Is it nothing that over against your *sometime*-mistakes and sometime-discouragement shall be written, "She hath done what she could?"

DANIEL WEBSTER'S HOME.

T was not as a mere relic-hunter, that I crossed the threshold of Daniel Webster's home in Marshfield. As a Bostonian, long years ago, I had been spell-bound by those wondrous eyes, and that irresistible eloquence which so seldom failed to magnetize. As to the mistaken words which, had he lived till now, I firmly believe he would have grievingly wished unsaid, and which have palsied many hands that would have been raised over that roof in blessing, I have nothing to say now. As far as the East is from the West, so far do I differ with him on that point. But all these thoughts vanished, and the old Boston magnetism moved me, as I stood in that beautiful library, which, more than any other room of that lovely home, *his* presence seemed to fill and pervade. The beautiful sunlight streamed in upon the favorite books he loved so well, upon the favorite chair and table, upon the thousand and one tributes of love and admiration from across the sea, and from nearer home, which are still carefully treasured. *There* only, after all these years, could I really "make him *dead*." My last sight of him was on a public occasion in Boston, sitting in a barouche, with that grand massive head uncovered, in recognition of the applause about him. And I am not ashamed, at this distance, to say that when he kissed the forehead of my little girl—now a woman grown—as he took from her hand the flowers I sent him, that I looked upon it as a sort of baptism.

Now, all about his home in Marshfield, are family pictures of the little children he tenderly loved. And what beautiful children they are! or *were*, for many of their names are now recorded on marble beside his own. And above the picture of him—as if such a head as *his* could ever be faithfully reproduced!—were his hat and stick. I stood looking at them, and wondering if, when he used to sit there he ever thought of *that*—if when resting in that peaceful spot, with bloom and brightness about him, weary with the ceaseless strife, and with the din of life, shut out, for a time at least, he ever longed to lay them aside for ever—thus!

In every house, the individuality of it is that which interests us most. *These* household gods all had their little story; all, too, spoke of taste and refinement and culture, and love of the beautiful in form, color, and arrangement. It almost seemed an impertinence to move about from room to room, and gaze at them; and, I think, had it not been that one of the family recognized and welcomed me as a remembered Bostonian, I should have felt very much like an inexcusable intruder there.

All honor to Daniel Webster for having had painted, and hung up in a conspicuous place in his house, *the portrait of his black cook*. It is the most unique object in it; and the feeling which prompted this public recognition of faithful service was most honorable to him. Alas! had he always been as true to his better instincts!

The simple majesty of Daniel Webster's tomb is very impressive. It is fit that it should be *there*, at Marshfield, within sound of the restless sea—restless as his spirit. For inscription—only the name and date, and those memorable words of his on Immortality. There are no mysteries to him *now*.

Some men—can anybody tell us why?—always gravitate *downward* in their male friendships. Their boon-companion is sure to be one destitute of everything that would seem to constitute an equality. Now what can be the reason of this? Is it because such persons need to have their self-respect constantly bolstered up by the flattery of parasites? Whatever the motive may be, the *result* is certain deterioration. Not, on the other hand, that it is not best to meet with, and know all sorts of persons; but *invariably* to choose inferiority, for a bosom-friend, argues a flaw, and a serious one, somewhere.

A TRIP TO RICHMOND.

EAUTIFUL BALTIMORE! I kiss my hand to beautiful Baltimore! Passing through it only on my way to Washington in days gone by, I had only flying, and muddy, and back-street reminiscences of it. *Now* it seems to me the most elegant of cities. Dear to my New England eyes, above all, are its polished windows, immaculate and spacious front-door steps, cleanly gutters, and sidewalks free from defilement of ashes and garbage. The sweet, wholesome air of the place, with no taint to offend the most fastidious nose, contrasted pleasantly with our large New York residences; many of whose occupants, having begun life in tenement houses, still retain their fondness for tenement-house odors and dirty sidewalks. I passed through street after street, without seeing an ash-barrel or box, or anything repulsive to neatness; and that, not only where the wealthy reside, but where were houses of very moderate rents and dimensions, yet all shining and clean, and sweet, as a child's face when newly washed, and framed in its best Sunday bonnet. Beautiful Baltimore! I came well-nigh forgetting, as I strolled along, that *you* ever stood on one side the political fence, and *I* on the other; but we wont rake up old grievances, or new ones either. Instead, I will say that your new "Druid Hill Park" is a gem, and a big one; and if you don't make the most of it, it will not be because nature has not fashioned its undulating surface, and grown giant trees there ready to your hand with a grace and a profusion which leave you little to do in the way of art. Now, our "Central Park" was fashioned in the face and teeth of every disadvantage; and yet see what a joy and beauty and delight it is to us all. So, shame to you, Baltimore, if you don't far outstrip us! Sure I am, that the occupants of those tasteful and magnificent private dwellings can need no hint from me to contribute liberally toward it.

Elegant stores, too, has Baltimore; and in them all the little last new feminine dodges in the way of adornment, so that no Baltimore husband need heed his wife's prayer to go to New York to see what is the last new fashion in gloves, boots, silks, laces, bonnets, or—hair. Baltimore wives may not thank me for this, but I am not afraid; for I can truly say that their faces were so bright that sunny day, as they nodded smilingly to one another, that I trembled for the wide-spread fame of New York beauties. Little loves of children too, I saw, with their sable nurses; oh! how I like the sable nurses. No *French* caps *shamming* it over *Celtic* faces; but instead, the jolly African physiognomy, framed in its gay turban; and, best of all—forgive me, fair Baltimore!—*receiving* as well as *earning* a nurse's wages.

I always feel as if a coroner's inquest would be held over me, when I cross a steamboat gangway, even though there may be blue sky overhead, and sunshine about me.

Judge, then, of my consternation, as the Baltimore boat pushed off for Norfolk, Va., and I discovered directly beneath my state-room window about a dozen barrels

of *kerosene*. In vain did the philosopher try to bamboozle me into the belief that "it was lard." After fifteen years conjugal acquaintance with my nose, it was a stupidity of which only a man could be guilty.

"Lard!" I exclaimed; "it is kerosene! and a military company on board too." Now I *don't* "love the military." I had one fearful experience with them, on board the ill-fated Lady Elgin, when, in the midst of a howling tempest, with thunder and lightning thrown in, their tipsy howls made a perfect pandemonium.

Military companies smoke too; and there is always fire where there is smoke, says the old proverb; and sparks and kerosene are things better divorced. So I didn't undress that night, and had plenty of time to consider a question which for the first time I asked myself,—whether a steamboat ought not, in a case like this, to forfeit its insurance. That part of my education having been neglected at boarding-school, I was unable to solve it; so I shudderingly recognized the fact, that men on the upper deck were smoking pipes, and knocking ashes and sparks from the railing with a verdant innocence and stupidity quite astounding.

But the "angel aloft," wafted away the sparks from the kerosene; and a friendly rain coming on, my perturbed spirit had a great calm. So we got to Norfolk whole and alive—no thanks to that steamboat or its owners. It was lucky I had my excitement *going* there, for a more stagnant, sleepy place—outside of the Dead Sea—never announced itself. Still, there were peach-trees in blossom, and tulip-trees, and the pretty blue periwinkle peeped from the hedges and gardens, and the grass was green, and—so was everything else there! One day sufficed me, although it was pleasant to sit with open windows. Our coachman dragged us up and down through the narrow, dilapidated looking streets, over pavements that forced to our lips the letter O oftener than any other in the alphabet, while "showing us the city." As the streets were all alike, we cut short his little fun by requesting to be set down at our hotel, while one bone remained undislocated.

The grave-yard was, after all, the pleasantest spot through which we drove in Norfolk. Whole graves there were covered with the blue flowers of the running myrtle; they were even peeping up under the little patches of snow. "Five dollars fine for picking a blossom." A good rule; but I was always unruly, and that blue myrtle is my favorite flower. Still I don't say I plucked one—of course not; how could I, inside a carriage?

Norfolk should be named "Sleepy Hollow." I can't conceive of keeping awake there, unless by help of their corduroy pavements. It was tame, after living in New York, where there is always "a dreadful *lass* of life," as the newsboys express it, or something that is pleasant happening.

Whoso essays to travel South, and having bade good-by to a certain hotel in Philadelphia, which don't begin with A or B, and which, if you have not, you *ought* to—C, leaves hope and comfort behind; having then left what, in my opinion, is the perfection of hotel-keeping, in all its myriad departments. Farewell to

clean rooms, and *genuine* coffee, and well-cooked meats, and prompt attendance; and welcome drafts, and cooked poison, in every shape that the fiend of the gridiron and frying-pan could devise. Having exhausted Washington three or four different times from a luxurious standpoint, it only remained on this flying transit through it, for Washington to exhaust me, between the hours of eight in the evening and seven the following morning. In one of the principal hotels of the place, I give you, by way of curiosity, an inventory of the room into which we were ushered. Imprimis—a bed, with sheets still warm with the print of the last occupant; wash-bowls grimy with departed paws; dirty towels; and a broken window pane, through which the snow was sifting; two immense grease spots, each the size of a two-quart bowl, in the centre of the dingy carpet; matches scattered round *ad libitum*; a horror of a spitoon in the middle of the floor; dirty window-curtains, and closets full of old papers; bureau drawers saturated with grease; bedstead cracked across the foot-board, and so rickety, that it was suggestive of a discordant music-box. Sofa dingy, and placed with singular felicity immediately under the broken window; while the looking-glass was fastened to the top of a bureau, so high, that one need mount a stool to look in it, and located, as usual, in the darkest corner of the apartment; a woollen cloth on the centre-table, approachable only by a pair of tongs. Finally a chamber-maid was procured, and towels, sheets, and a fire followed, while we were at tea. Afterward my companion lay down to rest (?) on the music-box; while I, upon the dingy sofa, front of the fire, listened, laughing, to the squeaks produced on it, by his attempts to sleep.

My reflections were various. I didn't wonder that Congressmen lodging thus, should call naughty names, and tear each other's eyes out at the Capitol. And what disgraceful, broken-down saloon surroundings are about the Capitol building! I never look at its beautiful proportions without incendiary desires to make a clean sweep of the old shanties about it, and in their place introduce cleanliness and beauty. Who knows the Christianizing effect it might have on men and measures? I should like to see it tried.

Well, I went "on to Richmond;" and my first reflection upon getting into it was, Lord! what a place for two big armies to fight about! A cold, piercing, rasping wind blew through the dismal streets from the river—a wind that would have done credit to old Boston at its fiercest. As to hotels, the deterioration begins at Baltimore, and "after that the deluge." As the horror-struck man said, when the tail-board of his cart came out going up hill, and distributed his potatoes right and left, "No swearing could do justice to it!" Amid remains of former splendor, dilapidation and stagnation reign.

Two visits I shall never forget. The first was to Libby prison. I looked through its grated, cobwebbed windows, not with *my* eyes, but with the hopeless eyes of hundreds whose last earthly glimpse of the sunlight was through them. The walls having been whitewashed, we discovered no marks or writings. Only upon the wooden floor, as the dirt was cleared away for us, we saw a place chipped out, upon which the prisoners had played checkers. Not far off was Belle Isle, where, in just

such a biting wind from the river, as excoriated our faces that day, brave men, without shelter, froze and starved to death!

Yes, I passed through Washington, and I didn't want office either. Had I, I think my patience would soon have oozed out, in the stifling atmosphere of that room in the White House, where clamorous lobbyists sat with distended eyes, watching the chance of their possible entrance to the President's presence—sat there, too, for weary hours, a spectacle to gods and men; of human beings willing to sacrifice self-respect and time, and what little money they had left in their purses, for the gambler's chance. Anything, everything, but the open and above-board, and sure and independent, and old-fashioned way of getting a living!

So I thought as the living stream poured in, and I went out, thankful that I desired nothing in the gift of the President of the United States of America. How any man living can wish to be President passes my solving, I said, as I stepped out into the clear, fresh, bracing air, and shook my shoulders, as if I had really dropped a burden of my own under that much-coveted roof. I can very well conceive that a pure patriot might wish the office, because he sincerely believed himself able to serve his country in it, and *therefore* accepted its crown of thorns; but lacking this motive, that a man in the meridian of life, or descending its down-hill path, and consequently with the full knowledge of this life's emptiness, should stretch out *even one hand* to grasp such a distracting position, I can never understand. The good dame "who went to sleep with six gallons of milk on her mind" every night, was a fool to do it. A step-mother's life under the harrow were paradise to it; only the life of a *country* clergyman who writes three sermons a week, and attends weddings at sixpence a piece, and hoes his own potatoes, and feeds the pigs, and is on hand for church and vestry meetings during the week, and keeps the run of all the new-born babies and their middle names, and is always, in a highly devotional frame of mind, is a parallel case.

I should like to have taken all those lobbyists I saw in the White House with me the afternoon of that day to "Arlington Heights," and bade them look there at the thousands of head-stones, gleaming white like the billows of the sea in the sunlight, far as the eye could reach, labelled "unknown," "unknown," telling the simple tragic story of our national struggle more effectually than any sculptured monument could have done. I would like to have shown them this, to see if for one moment it had power to paralyze those eager hands outstretched for bubbles.

"Unknown?" Not to him, in whose book every one of those names are written in letters of light! Not to him, in whose army of the faithful unto death, there are no "privates"!

My eyes were blind with tears, as I signed my name in the visitor's book at the desk of the Freedman's Bureau there, once General Lee's residence. All *was* "quiet on the Potomac," as its blue waters glittered in the sunlight before us. Yet the very air was thick with utterances. The place on which I stood is now indeed holy ground. And far off rose the white dome of the Capitol, crowded with men, some of them, thank

God, not forgetting these white head-stones, in their efforts to keep inviolate what these brave fellows died for; and some, alas! willing to sell their glorious birthright for a "mess of pottage."

The sharp contrast of luxury and squalor, in Washington, even exceeding New York,—the carriages and their liveries, and the sumptuous dames inside; the pigs which run rooting round the streets; the tumble-down, shambling, rickety carts, with their bob-tailed, worn-out donkeys, so expressive of lazy unthrift,—must be regarded with the eye of a New Englander, trained to thoroughness and "faculty," to be properly appreciated. I avow myself, cursed or blessed, as you will, with the New England "bringing up," to which anything that "hangs by the eyelids" is simple crucifixion, whether it be in a cart or a statute-book, unhinged door, or a two or a four-legged dawdle.

"Oh, you'd come into it, and be as lazy as anybody," said my companion, "if you lived here a while."

Shade of the Pilgrim Fathers!—Assembly's Catechism!—baked beans—fish-balls—"riz" brown bread! Never!

I didn't see Vinnie Ream's statue of Lincoln. It was boxed for Italy, Congress having made the necessary appropriation. But I saw Vinnie. She has dimples. Senators like dimples. And in case the statue is not meritorious, why—I would like to ask, amid the crowd of lobbying *men*, whose paws are in the national basket, after the loaves and fishes—should not this little woman's cunning white hand have slily drawn some out?

THE COMING LANDLORD.

T is a marvel to me that country landlords do not better arrange their houses, with a view to keeping their guests later in the lovely autumnal days. The absence of gas, and the omnipresence of bad-smelling kerosene, are great drawbacks to enjoyment in the chilly evenings which follow these golden days. Fires which get low at the very moment they are most needed in the sitting-rooms, and a cold dining-hall, filled with kitchen-smoke, are not incentives to a prolonged stay; add to this, the utter impossibility of finding one's way of an evening through a village guiltless of lights and shrouded in trees, and it is no marvel that city people begin to think of cosey evenings by their own firesides where are both warmth and light, without which Paradise itself were a desert.

I think landlords who have an eye to business should take what may seem to them, perhaps, very *uninfluential* motives, under serious consideration. I am very sure that if their own houses were made comfortable for the autumn, enough lovers of the season would remain to reward them pecuniarily for any such foresight. Let the fashionists go—there are plenty left to rejoice in the crisp air, the falling bright-hued leaves, the glory of sunshine and shadow on the mountain-tops, and the keen sense of *life at the full* which comes of wandering among them.

I think *I* should understand engineering an hotel! I know just where the shoe pinches, at least, which is half the battle. In the first place, I wouldn't smoke a pipe, and then I should not be tempted to put those halcyon moments before the comfort and convenience of my guests, how imperative soever the occasion. Then my temper would be angelic, and I could understand how every lady in the house could "have her room cleared up" at one and the same moment, though the lady-guests numbered a full hundred! Then—I should see my way clear to let every little child on the premises dig deep holes in the gravel walk which leads to the front door, and fill them with water, for infantile amusement, and to further the laudable ambition of the nurses, in reading fourth-rate pamphlet novels. Then I should better understand my duty in riding ten miles to get a watermelon for one lady, eleven miles to get a quart of peaches for another, and six miles for grapes for a third; and, at the same time, be on the piazza, to be a walking Time-Table for strangers and others who wish information at short notice on railroad subjects. Were I a non-smoker, I should be consolable under the necessity of remaining out of my bed till the latest midnight reveller had gone to his, and up in the morning before daylight, to be sure that the eggs for the departing Grumble family were cooked neither too hard nor too soft. Also, I would have *one pane of glass* in each *chamber*-window in the house a looking-glass, immovably inserted, for the benefit of those ladies who prefer some light while combing their hair. Those who dreaded the light on that occasion might fall back upon the time-honored looking-glass which landlords are sure to locate in the darkest corner

of the room. Then I could see my way clear to take files of all the city papers for the children in the house to make kites of, or for ladies to wrap parcels or curl their hair in. Also, I should provide compact and portable lanterns, with an accompanying servant, for the use of those ladies who fancy evening rambles through a dark village street.

You will see by this how inexhaustible is this subject, and how much remains to be done, which only a *female* mind could foresee, or suggest. I generously give these hints to unenlightened landlords, free of charge, and doubt not that my next summer's travels will attest not only their practicability, but their execution; meantime we are going home; to coffee, *real* coffee, praised be Allah for that! It is bad to leave the mountains, but chiccory is not palatable either.

It is hard to break up a pleasant summer party, at the close of the season, for we never can take it up again where we leave off. For some there will be weddings, for some there will be funerals—good-by, said so gaily, will surely be final to some of us who utter it. We shall take up the paper some day, and a well-known name will catch the eye in that dark list of bereavement. We shall recall its owner on *that* morning of the party to the "mountain," or the "lake," and the bright eye, and the flowing hair, and the voice of music—and then the world will close round us, and all will go on as before, till our turn comes, too, to be forgotten.

We never quite realize how dear any particular face is to us until we meet it in a crowd of strangers' faces. It is only then that we begin to know that we do not love it simply for its beauty; that there is something more in it to us than pure outline and sweet color, or whatever its particular charm may be. We have been hurrying on perhaps up Broadway—a stream of unknown people on the left, and another on the right. We have thought "how beautiful" of some, "how ugly" of others. Suddenly we think, "It is ——." We do not compare, we do not criticize. We may vaguely recognize the fact that it is the plainest or the prettiest face we have met; but that has nothing to do with it. There comes our friend, blotting out the strangers as though they were not. Even if we pass and do not speak, our hearts meet and soften; and we are happier throughout the whole long day, for having met a friend's face in a crowd.

OUT ON THE END OF CAPE ANN.

OOD-BY, City! I'm off! Now that wretched ragman may jingle the six great cow-bells attached to his miserable hand-cart, to his heart's content. They have driven me to the verge of distraction with their monotonous clang—clang—clang, ever since the weather was warm enough to sit with open windows. How many times I have resolved to call the attention of the policeman on our "beat" to this illegal disturbance of the peace; particularly as he chooses *our* street to meander up and down in, merely because I am a scribbler, and it drives me mad—why else does he do it? For Heaven knows, I never did, or would bestow a "rag" upon him, though I never was to see *paper* again. Good-by to the unfeeling wretch; I bequeath him to the unfortunates I leave behind; who like myself are too lazy to chase up a policeman for his summary ejection.

Good-by, I say again. I am going out to grass. I shall shortly find a clover-field where I intend to bury my disgusted nose until October. So anybody who chooses may leave their odorous dirt-barrels on the sidewalk till sundown to regale neighborly olfactories. The postman may pull my bell-wire till it breaks; he will get no response from me. I don't care who didn't do what; or when it wasn't done. I'm for *Katy-dids*!

I've done with shopping, thank Heaven! If my clothes or shoes give out, let 'em. I've done with grocer-boys, and ice-men, and bakers, and brewers. I'm going back to milk and nature; and I'm going to be weighed before I go, to see what will come of it.

Perhaps I shall meet you there; and you—and you. If I should, for Heaven's sake don't talk "shop" to me. Speak of "caows" and "medder-land," and welcome—but don't mention books, not even my last new one, "Folly as it Flies," which any of you who can, are welcome to read—*I* can't. And don't pump me as you always do, to know "what sort of a man is Mr. Bonner?" I tell you, once for all, that he is the *right* sort, and you couldn't improve on that.

And if you see me coming in to dinner, and think it worth while to announce the fact, in a place where there is a dearth of news, just do it quietly, so that I shan't feel like throwing a biscuit at your head, and don't think, because I am a literary woman, that I live on violets and dew—I don't. I wear awful thick shoes, and go out in the mud, and like to get stuck there; and I am horrid old—fifty-six—and ugly besides; and I shall speak when I feel like it, and when I don't, I shan't, because it is too much to be on my good behavior all the year round, and this is my vacation.

Now we have settled all that, I hope, and there's nothing left but to toss my traps into my trunk, and lock it. I don't care much whether there is anything inside of it or not, for I'm desperate. These few last hot days have finished me. I'm almost afraid to trust myself to "write a character" for my departing chamber-maid, I feel so savage. You can take her, though; the only crime she will have to "carry to confession" is, that when she puts my room "to rights," she invariably turns the table which has a drawer

in it, the *drawer-side next the wall*. To a person of my feeble intellect, this is distracting, especially in the dark; and I have so many distractions, and am so much in the dark, that really, Father Malooney, or some other nice priest, ought to jog her elbow on this point. They who will may abuse Roman Catholic priests—every *sensible housekeeper* knows their value. Long life to the like of 'em, *I* say.

Good-by! If I am smashed on the railroad, weep over my *pieces*. I think you told me you had already done that—on less provocation.

Geography never could find a lodgement in my head; but this I will assert, without fear of being sent to "the foot of the class," that granite, fish, and sand, are the principal products of Cape Ann. When you go down Broadway and see those square stone blocks in process of being pounded down for our mutual benefit, know that I am up here, a self-constituted superintendent of the work. Said a Cape-Ann-der the other day, "When you see six hundred ton of granite taken out of a quarry every week for the whole summer, you'd *not*-erally think that 'twould leave a hole there, but it don't." I mention this remark to you as a proof of the fertility of the soil.

Needle and thread are not to be despised any more than the deft fingers which ply them; but you should sit on a big stone at one of the quarries, and watch four or five of these stalwart fellows, each muscular hand grasping the hammer, coming down rhythmically, surely, powerfully, at the same instant, hour after hour, on the same huge granite block, till it is shaped for its purpose. It was a grand and suggestive sight to me. The men who did it were heroes; shaping—who can tell what?—monuments for history—public buildings—that will stand long after you and I are forgotten. And the other side of these exhaustless stone caverns rolled the broad ocean, waiting to float off on its mighty bosom these huge masses of granite to any desired port. And close by were woods, so filled with song, and perfume, and deep, cool shadows, and soft hum of insect life, and ancient trees, moss-coated, where the swell of the ocean and the sound of all this labor came with muffled breath, as if fearful to bring jarring discord to all that harmony. This granite, thought I, may stand for our pilgrim fathers; these woods, with their song and perfume, for their wives and daughters, who brought to this "rock-bound coast" the softening influence of their sweet, holy presence.

Away from all this, over the hill, down in the village, are the stores, and, more important to me, the post-office. I don't know what our pilgrim fathers did, but I know that to-day their descendants close them when they go to tea or dinner, while expectant customers patiently *roost* on the neighboring fences till their places reopen. But I am happy to state that the Cape-Ann-ders make up for this placidity when they get hold not only of granite, but of horse-flesh. It is their stereotyped rule to race up-hill, at break-neck speed. It is therefore needless to state how they go *down-hill* and how perfectly immaterial to them it is whether the horse fetches up in a stone-quarry or in the ocean. I ought to know, for I have danced often enough into the wet grass and dust, and over stone walls, in order to save my neck, to know. You see the Cape-Ann-ders, being born with oars in their hands, have not studied horse-flesh like Mr.

Bonner. The ocean is their hunting-ground. One can't excel in all the virtues; but such fish as they coax out of it, and such chowder as they make of it, would go far to make one forget their equestrianism. I've seen about every kind of fish on the table except whales, of which I had my first astonished view yesterday. That *bulk can be frisky* was the first lesson they taught me. As to their spouting, a political meeting is nothing to it! When they came up out of water to breathe, you might have heard them in New York—that is, if the rag-man, with his six infernal jangling cow-bells, hadn't been going through your street.

There is nothing I have sighed for in those streets since I left them, except some digestible bread. I suppose you know *that* commodity is seldom furnished *out* of the city. If you don't, you may read it in the faces of nearly every woman, and child too, after a certain age, in the country. The *men*, by virtue of working in the open air, worry through with it better. *Saleratus*, *soda*, *shortening*, *grease*, and sugar! these are as infallibly married to pills, and castor-oil, and rhubarb, and bitters, as are the sexes to each other. All over New England, in these lovely leafy homes, with the blessing of sweet, pure, untainted air, with literally *no* excuse for sickness, vile bread vitiates and neutralizes God's best gifts.

The cupboards and closets of these naturally healthy homes are stuffed full of "physic;" and the country doctor, who *ought*, in these lovely villages, to be a pauper, thrives on the disastrous consumption of FRIED *everything*, and clammy bread. Meantime my excellent country friends put up pounds and quarts of "*jell*" every fall. Now, let them know that half, or a quarter of the time spent in making these indigestible sugary concoctions, if spent in learning to make good bread, would obliterate all traces of dyspepsia both under their belts and in their faces. If I seem to speak unkindly, I do not feel so; only it seems to me such a useless waste of material, and what is infinitely worse, such a criminal waste of health, that I cannot help entering my earnest protest against it.

I boldly assert that dyspepsia *in the country* is a disgrace. The birds' song is not heard by a dyspeptic. The flowers by the road-side throw out no incense for him. There may be fish in *his* ocean, but there is no beauty there. How can there be with *that* fiend plucking at his suspenders?

And oh, the country washerwoman! Can anybody tell why she, having tried her fists only on red flannel, calico, and sheets, should announce herself as a professional laundress, and up to the mysteries of bluing, rinsing, clear-starching, and ironing? Trustingly you place your linen in her hands, and she departs to some spot where sun, fresh air, clover-blossoms, and plenty of water are all in her favor. In process of time she returns your clothes. The next morning your husband reproachfully requests you to examine *that* shirt-bosom, with its streaks of bluing, its little globules of starch, and its scorched spots, presenting a zebra front rivalled only in a menagerie. Now, perhaps shirt-bosoms are the only part of your husband's apparel in which he takes any interest; your educatory efforts in behalf of his gloves, boots, &c., having failed

utterly; for that reason you weep, that this single germ of neatness, thus untimely nipped in the bud, should cause him to backslide into that normal slovenliness from which woman alone delivers him.

Well—he struggles into that shirt-bosom, and, with a man's inability to face disagreeable things, goes off without consulting his looking-glass; and you sit on the side of the bed, with your hair in your eyes, contemplating a pair of "clean" stockings just taken from your drawer.

That streak of dirt, carefully preserved, was got last week down on the rocks, from contact with seaweed; and that in the meadows, where you went for ferns and wild flowers; and that, when you slipped one leg down a deep and treacherous dirt-hole, trying to get a big blackberry. You can identify every one. You go to your closet for a gingham dress. When you put it in the wash it was gray, now it is a sickly green. You get a "clean" collar and cuffs—they are both saffron color. You are rather particular about the mixing of tints, and so have to give up the idea of a bow at your neck that will "go" with this rainbow apparel, and fall back, instead, on a safe jet pin, as emblematic also of your feelings.

I don't mention in this connection a little habit the country washerwoman has of returning Mrs. Smith's husband's flannel drawers, instead of the conjugal pair which generally delight my eyes, well mended and with buttons on the waistband, (hem!) while *Smith's* are in a state of non-repair, disgusting even to "a literary woman." I don't speak of my cambric under-waist, irretrievably torn down the back, or Smith's night-gown, about half the length of mine, which last is probably at that moment quietly reposing beside *Mrs.* Smith; but I pause to ask you to survey—yes, *survey*, for that is the proper word—this great table-cloth of a pocket-handkerchief of Smith's instead of my own dear little hem-stitched one, with a tiny fern-leaf in the corner. As to Smith's socks, they make it their home in my room, without any permit from the priest. I'm getting sick of Smith.

Again, my sisters, can you tell me why the country washerwoman invariably appears with her bundle of "clean" clothes just as you are starting for a ride, or going down to breakfast? Can one enjoy lovely scenery, or relish one's coffee and eggs, while this intermarriage of strange stockings and nightgowns is going on in one's room, and the fruitless hunt for ten cents to make "even change" is looming up in the horizon? I am constrained to say that in what light soever I view the country washerwoman, she is ——. Yes, ma'am!

P.S.—A Cape Ann editor gave me a box on the ear the other day for some remark I made on country washing. Now be it known that I am so accustomed to a boxed ear in a good cause, that I have learned to stiffen up to it, and I can endure it now without even winking.

But to business. This Cape Ann editor inquires, "why, if I do not like the Cape Ann washing, I do not get out the wash-tub, and wash my clothes myself." I smile serenely, while I answer, that while Mr. Bonner pays me enough for my articles to

buy out this editor's printing-office, I prefer to do precisely what *he* would do, were he in my place—turn my back on the wash-tub and face the inkstand. Is he answered? I am sorry also to inform him that all womanhood seems to be "marching on" to the same or similar results, and that by and by men will have to choose their words in addressing "women folks;" not, I hope, for fear of being "knocked down," but because woman, be she married or single, being able to earn her own living independent of marriage,—that often hardest and most non-paying and most thankless road to it,—she will no longer have to face the alternative of serfdom or starvation, but will marry, when she does marry, for love and companionship, and for co-operation in all high and noble aims and purposes, *not* for bread and meat and clothes; and the men who sneer at this picture are always sure to be men with souls narrow as a railroad track, who never look or desire to look beyond the curve and out into the wide world of progress.

Then, if a woman's husband dies, she will not stay to hear his or her relatives disputing over his dead body which shall contribute *least* to her support. No: she will rub the tears out of her eyes, and taking her children by the hand, pocket the well-earned wages of a book-keeper; or she will be an architect; or she will write books, or open a store; or she may even rise to the dignity of editor of a "Cape Ann" paper—who knows?—or through any one of the open doors through which the light of woman's millennium is shining, she will pass serenely to collect her dividends. No more hysterics, sirs! no more fainting! no more trudging miles to match a ribbon! no more eating her heart out, trying to bear rough usage! She wont *have* rough usage! She will be in a position to receive good treatment, from *motives of policy*, from those natures which are incapable of better and higher. She will, in short, stand on her own blessed independent feet, so far as "getting a living" is concerned, as I do to-day, and able to make mouths even at Cape Ann, which—blessed be its rocks and "cunner"!—has not yet found the philosopher's stone, or made, even out of its vile bread, a "dyspeptic" of me, as its editor asserts.

Me "a dyspeptic"?—me! who could eat a block of its granite for dinner, and ask for another for dessert?—me! who, at fifty-eight, can tramp ten miles, every day, over its horrid rocky roads, and come back red as a peony and fresh as a lark!—me a dyspeptic? I am sorry to inform "Cape Ann" that I am as "live" as one of its whales, and none of its harpoons will ever finish me. And that my mission, wheresoever I sojourn in summer, is to preach down bad country washing, and bad bread, and country dyspepsia; and Cape Ann might as well, first as last, burn down its churches, for sal-eratus and sal-vation will never wed; for the victims of the former will walk this bright earth, so full of sparkle and sunshine and fragrance and bloom, with bowed heads, contracted chests, and pallid faces, nursing the dyspeptic's cherished vision of an "*angry God*"! That's where bad bread lands them!

As to "washing," bless you! there was a time when I did all my own washing, and did it well too. That's the way I came to know how to speak with authority on the

starch and flat-iron question; and besides, as I said before, if Mr. Bonner will insist on paying my washing bills, whose business is it, save his and mine? He is quite welcome.

There are people who get up in the morning for the express purpose of making somebody uncomfortable before the day is out. They generally pitch upon some sunny-faced, happy, singing human lark carolling high above the ditches and marshes of life, soaring in the blue ether of his happiness, nearer God and the angels than he himself knows anything about, and, taking practised aim at some vulnerable point, bring him plump down, with maimed wing, to flutter in the dust. Now what is good enough for such a miscreant? The more you flutter the better he likes it; every writhe of your agonized spirit is delicious music to this vulture; there is one other person in the world as uncomfortable as himself. What right had *you* to be happy when *his* liver was out of order? It was clearly a piece of impertinent presumption, and so there you lie moaning and turning, the sunshine all gone, the chill mist of despondence gathering thick about you, and your persecutor standing by, turning you over now and then with his foot, to see if there is life enough left for a fresh attack.

COUNTRY DIET.

OREIGN missions and missionaries. These have their place and their work. What *I* want to see is a Home Mission and Home Missionaries, having for an object the extermination of the unhealthy and *immoral* bread of New England. When matters have got to that pass that a perfectly sound, healthy person cannot decline eating this poison without being supposed to have an imperfect digestion, the climax of stupidity and ignorance is reached by its makers and defenders. "*The heathen?*" Great Cesar! who *are* heathen, if the makers of this bread are not? I know of a factory where pie, whose principal ingredient is "lard," is the staple article of food placed before the operatives. And so imperfectly is it baked, that the lard is not really melted in the process. This for *breakfast*! with muddy coffee and sour bread! This for supper, with sour bread. This "pie" taken to the factory for lunch or dinner also. Imagine a hundred or so of young women feeding on such poison as that. Future wives, possibly, of hard-working mechanics, expected to do the family washing, and bear and rear children, on the results of such an atrocious diet. It were enough to expect them even to bear themselves, robbed of the vitality and spring of their youth by these fiendish providers. The man who sets fire to a house at night, and smothers all the inmates, is a saviour in comparison. *They* die at once. *These* linger weary years, fighting disease, fighting gloomy thoughts, as truly needing compassion and sympathy as any victim of delirium-tremens. Now take a girl, fresh from the old country, her cheeks red with the rich, pure blood manufactured from sweet-milk, potatoes, and oatmeal, and place her in one of these factories on this fare. It needs no seer to tell how long, even with such a stock of health as she brings, that she can stand this exterminating process; how long before those sound white teeth will begin to ache and blacken, and the bright clear eyes dim, and the cheek wear yellow instead of red roses, and the flesh become flabby, and the whole creature become demoralized. Now, I ask, Is nobody guilty for all this waste and wreck? Is it any more trouble to make sweet, wholesome bread, than to manufacture and multiply bad pies? As a matter of policy, wouldn't these operatives work better on a piece of beefsteak and a slice of sweet bread, than on pie and pickles? As a matter of *morality*, ought not such caterers to be held to strict account? Can *virtue* even flourish where the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; when morbidness takes the place of hope, and faith is merged in despair? What wonder that of dyspepsia should come the suicide's rope?

And as to the usual country boarding-house or hotel fare, for which the keepers of these places coolly pocket their fees, I propose some deduction be made by them for the doctor's bills consequent the ensuing winter; some reduction for the sour milk that the children have drunk, because the cans in which it was kept were not properly washed and aired, or the ice-house kept in good order; some reduction for the state of the stomach caused by taking refuge from bad bread in poor crackers; some reduction

for generating such a disgust of meat, from the sight of it in its various stages of raw, burnt, and grease-soaked, that weeks or months even of wholesome food can scarcely tempt one trial of the article; some reduction for aching limbs produced by bunchy beds an entire "season;" some reduction for boarders performing the part of "waiters," through the season, in the total absence of bell-wires in the establishment; some reduction for inhaling the noxious gases of refuse kitchen matter, carelessly thrown around the house, or the nuisance of beating about the country in search of a washerwoman. Before the bill is finally settled, and the trunks packed, I would like to see these questions considered by the country landlord.

But you say, "It is all ignorance; *they don't know any better*." As if that was not just where the agony came in! As if an "*ignorant*" person had any right to take such a position, or any right to expect anything like the same pay as a competent, intelligent one receives.

Now I have made up my mind to "speak in meetin'". I don't care how many country editors jump on the fence and say, "Silence!" I wont *be* silent. I intend to fight a crusade against this crying sin of New England, so long as I can make a pen wag; and anybody whose rustic feathers get ruffled in the process may take his own time to oil them down. I persist that I have never yet "boarded" anywhere in the country that I found wholesome bread there, or meat cooked other than *fried*, unless it has been through line upon line and precept upon precept of my own; and that in these awful experiences of mine, Cape Ann bears off the palm. There! I am going to-morrow to the city to get some decent bread—the only place where it is to be found—and get some fish; for if you want fish, never go where they swim. Put that in your note-book too.

And now, in conclusion, I will add, that in a place where, through sour bread and sour theology, the element of cheerfulness is especially needed to keep the young folks from turning into premature vinegar cruets, it is a very great pity that at a picnic their only outlet for conviviality—dancing, by the youngsters—should be considered a sin. "It would break up the whole thing—it would never do!" was the reply to a philanthropic suggestion of the kind. Heavens! I wonder they don't fetter the legs of their lambs and calves; and insist upon all their birds singing, "Hark! from the tombs a dreadful sound!" Do you know what young people so brought up will do?—that is, if they don't commit suicide first. They'll just go to the city, and break every one of the ten commandments smack through, the first day they get there. Alas! when will "good people" learn that the devil is never better pleased than when they try to make "religion" a gloomy thing.

Said a little child to her mother, "Shall you live as long as I do?"—"Perhaps not—but I cannot tell," was the reply; "I have lived a long while, you know."—"Well," said the little one, skipping about the room and singing, "I guess there'll be

somebody to take care of me." Oh, ye who are "careful and troubled,"—groping like the mole in the earth, blind to the brightness overhead, look up! like this little trusting child, look up! When you have made provision for to-day, as intelligently as you know how, do not be anxiously forecasting the morrow.

FROM MY SEAT ON THE ROCKS.

OG-FISH, cat-fish, cod-fish, cunner." These are the animals that my friends paddle round for long hours—happy whether they are rewarded with the sight of five or fifty. Meantime I sit on the rocks, watching the pretty picture they make as they go sailing into the sunset, and am content. *My* feet are *dry*; so are my skirts. We have only one thing in common: when they shout, "I have a bite!" I respond, Amen!—with this difference, that mine is from a mosquito instead of a fish. The ocean is nice to look at: freaky—therefore I think it must be a *she*; sometimes dark and lowering, sometimes brightly sparkling; now smooth as deceit, anon lashing itself like a caged creature to get out of bounds. Don't you believe I enjoy it more than those damp people that are always vexing it with rod and line? As I said, they look well as a part of the picture. Those deluded women, now, with broad hats tied down with bright bits of ribbon—and didn't they calculate the picturesqueness of the same when they bought yards of it a thousand miles away? Certainly. And why do they ruin their best boots treading on rocks covered with treacherous seaweed? And why is that scarlet shawl disposed just where it will be effective? Answer me that. Can it be that they are fishers of men instead of cod? Ah! "worms" are not the only "bait" in that boat. I wonder do men know how much more attractive they look in slouched hats and easy jackets? Kid gloves, shiny hat, and tight boots are nothing to it. A man looks manly then; and that, I take it, is the first requisite in a man. See how they dress for *their* work, my sisters. Sleeves up to the elbow, not for the purpose of showing a round white arm either; trousers turned up at the heel; while you—! Wont the laundress rub the skin off her knuckles when she tries to get the fish-bait off *your* ruffled skirt, my dear? You can't be made to believe that those gentlemen would like you just as well in a dress suitable for "worms." But, all things being equal, I really think they would; or, if they didn't, their opinion would be a matter of small consequence.

I wish I could understand the difference between a brig, a sloop, a dory, a schooner, and a yacht. I have had them explained so many times at the seaside, but it has never yet lodged in my head a minute. I think the reason is, that before my expounders get half through telling, my eyes are so enchained by the gliding beauty of a boat's motion, that I have no ears for technicalities. That's it—and I'm not such a fool after all! I wish my belt were a little more to be depended on, for I'd like to drift over to the Isle of Shoals, or to Newburyport, or some of those places at which the sea-fog plays hide and seek so temptingly from these rocks. Of course I "can go by land;" but did *you* never get possessed to do or to have what the Fates denied? Well, I'm human too. You may catch those wriggling fish if you fancy—I don't wonder they make such horrid mouths at you before they die—if only I could drift dreamily away into that golden sunset? "Gates of amethyst and pearl!" I'm glad my Bible has

"Revelations" in it. I don't know any poet who comes better to my assistance than Revelations. Keren Happuch, and Obed, and Jael—and "them" I am apt to skip; also who "begat Shem;" but the grand old "Psalms" and Revelations, I tell you, Tennyson, or any other "Son," may in vain crack their harp-strings trying to rival. Then imagine that watery dilution of a "Tupper" after reading a chapter in "Proverbs"! Put this in your note-book—that about all the good things you clap your hands at were stolen from the Bible. Brush the dust from off yours now, and see if it is not so; and have the grace to own up, when you do see it.

My heart is torn trying to decide whether my allegiance finally be given to the mountains or the ocean. I can see with my mind's eye lovely Brattleboro' and its enchanting mountains, the mist rolling slowly off their sides at sunrise, crowning their tops with many-hued wreaths; or I can see one gorgeous cloud at sunset resting lightly on their summit, and gradually fading away before the growing lustre of the bright evening star. All these pictures are framed in my memory, and never a tint has faded out through the busy years. But this later love of mine—the ocean—whom I perforce must admire at a respectful distance, sinuous, cold, treacherous, glittering, repelling, yet fascinating me as does the serpent the bird, I know not how to resist. Only last night this ocean drew a mist-veil softly over its face, and by help of a huge black cloud above it, jaggedly notched in and out at the upper edge, cunningly wooed me, in this mountain shape, to believe that whatsoever form I liked, that form *it* could assume to win me. Surely such devotion should have its reward.

WISHINGS AND LONGINGS.

ID you never *wish* you had it? Of course you have, a thousand times. You never would be miserable any more if it could only be so. You are sure of that. It may be a fine house, a fine store, a fine carriage. No matter what; the desire for it has taken the spice and flavor out of every blessing you possess. I used to play with a little girl once, who told me in confidence, and in pantalettes, "that she should never be happy till she had a real *true* gold watch; and that she meant to be married, as soon as ever she could, to a rich man who would give her one." For myself, I had much rather at that time have had a bunch of flowers, and I didn't suppose she really meant what she said, as she stood there tying on her doll's bonnet. But she was in dead earnest, though I *didn't* know it. Sure enough, she got her rich husband, and her gold watch; and was sick enough of both, as I have since found out, before the honeymoon was well over.

One day I heard a boy say to his younger brother, who was crying lustily, "Now, Tom, I know you don't want anything, but what do you *think* you want?" That boy was a philosopher, and went to the root of the matter. It is not what we really want, but what we *think* we want, that frets most of us. Perhaps you tell me that you suffer just as much as if your longing were a reasonable or a sensible one. That's true too; but if you only could snatch *to-day's* legitimate happiness, instead of wondering if you could not get a great deal more, for that to-morrow which may never come to you, wouldn't it be wiser? The other day I went off into the woods, with a dear little girl, who is much more of a poetess than a philosopher. Not a patch of soft green moss, not the tiniest bud of a wild flower, or flitting butterfly, or bird, or tree-shadow on the smooth clear lake, escaped her bright, glad eyes. The *first* flower she found enraptured her, and she climbed quite a steep rock with her mites of feet for the second, and so on till her tiny hands were full. Just then she found quite a bunch of bright pink blossoms; and I was so glad for her; when suddenly she burst into such a grieved, piteous cry, "Oh dear! oh dear! what *shall* I do? *I can't hold them all.*"

If we'd only think of that! That "we can't hold them all." That in order to grasp that which is the moment's wish, we must let something else drop that we prize. Something that we can never retrace our steps, in life's devious paths, to reclaim. It may be health, or character, or life itself, for that which is so perishable, so unsatisfying, so harmful, that we can never cease wondering how the "glamour" of it could have so dazzled our mental and moral vision. The little child I speak of, who clambered up the rock to secure that *one* flower, was happier in its possession than with the myriads that she afterwards found lying at her very feet. She had *earned* that one! She had encountered a fierce briar-bush; she had got her hands scratched in the conflict; she had tickled her little nose with a defiant twig; she had tangled her curls; she had scraped her little fat knee till it was red—and *got it*! All herself, too! I couldn't elaborate a better moral, if I preached an hour. We don't value happiness in heaps. It is

the one little sweet blossom, that comes unexpectedly in our way, that we love best after all. Isn't it so?

How cheap is advice! Advice is like a doctor's pills; how easily he *gives* them! how reluctantly he takes them when *his* turn comes! Meantime, it is well to keep one's eyes and ears open; but, after that, to decide for one's self. He who cannot do this is a human windmill, always beating the air—a weathercock, veering each minute to a new point. His life is a succession of experiments, all of which are predestined to be failures. He has no faith in himself, and people accept him at his own valuation.

A TRANSITION STATE.

E seem to be in a transition state all round. Politics, religion, woman's rights, men's wrongs, all seething in the caldron together; and everybody's finger is being thrust into the boiling mess, and pulled scalded out of it—some howling with the experiment, others closing their pioneer teeth upon the pain, and bearing it for the good of the cause.

This seems to me to be the situation. For one, I am quite willing to do humble duty by bringing fagots and kindling to keep the fire going, no matter who "hollers." Anything is better than letting it go out; at least so far as the woman question is one of the ingredients in the caldron. The men having the top round of the ladder at present, may sit there till we climb up and oust them, which wont be long; or rather, bless their jackets, till we climb up and oblige them to make room for us to sit down beside them, which, after all, is what we really want. I, for one, make no secret of liking the brethren, but I like them near—intellectually and socially. Not looking down at us from a dizzy height, careless how we stumble by the road-side, or cut our weary feet, or bruise our hearts, and stuffing their fingers in their ears, and then making believe they don't hear our cries; but helping us along generously after them, like good fellows, with a word of cheer, and a full hearty belief in our good intentions and desire to do *all* our duty. Isn't that reasonable? To be sure it is; and the only reason they don't always say so is, because, with their natural impatience, they never can sit still long enough to hear us through, when we talk common-sense. I believe the last question "up" was woman's right to wait upon herself to concerts, lectures, theatres, and the like, when she had no male escort. Now that is a subject that has been pretty well ploughed over in my mind for years. I have known so many bright, intelligent women obliged to stay at home when they needed these relaxations from care and toil and bother, because custom did not permit their attendance, unless they could lasso a coat and hat to bear them company. It has seemed to me cruel in the extreme, that this law should not be changed. As I understand it, in Paris a respectable woman can do this, without discomfort or molestation, with a *female* attendant; and though it may be the deathblow to my reputation to own that I never saw Paris, it is true, and I cannot therefore judge how much more safe a woman would be in waiting upon herself home in Paris, at the hour when public amusements are generally over, than in New York. This, I presume, is the hitch in the question. If so, women must wait till the majority of men are more chivalric and spiritual, and that wont be to-day, nor to-morrow. Now, a woman, by taking a big basket in her hand, and leaving her hoop at home, and pinning an old shawl over her head, and tying a calico apron round her waist, may walk unmolested. I know, because I have tried it when I felt like having a "prowl" all alone, and a good "think," without any puppy saying, at every step, "A pleasant evening, Miss." But this costume isn't exactly festive for the concert or lecture room.

However, with other ingredients, this topic may be tossed into the caldron above mentioned, and perhaps, after much boiling, may deposit some substantial sediment of benefit to women. I see so many men nowadays who ought to be women, that I am positively ashamed of usurping the place of one. I am quite willing to abdicate, whenever any one can be found to take a woman's place; but the joke begins here, that the silliest man who ever lived has always known enough, when he says his prayers, to thank God that he wasn't born a woman. So you see how hopeless the case is.

WHAT MARY THOUGHT OF JOHN.

HERE'S John, reading his newspapers. You might drive nails into his temples, and he wouldn't know it. Look at him! Legs up. Head thrown back. The inevitable and omnipresent pipe in his mouth; the very picture of absorbed enjoyment. Three papers he has there. He will read every one, criss-cross, cornerwise, upside down, and inside out, till he has gleaned every particle of news. One good hour he has been at it. Now if I say to him, "John, what is the news this morning?" that man will reply, "Oh, none—nothing in particular; there they are; take 'em, if you would like."

Now nobody in his senses believes that John has been employed one good hour reading "nothing." He is only too lazy to tell what he has read; that's the amount of it. Now I had much rather read those papers than mend this coat of his. It is really too bad in John: he might have given me something to think about, while I was doing it. An idea! Suppose I try this lazy system on *him*! Now if there's anything men like, when their wives come home with a budget of news, it is to have them sit down and entertain them with it. Not about troubles of servants and broken crockery, of course; but spicy little bits of gossip; about their friend Jones' wife, and what the witty Mrs. —— said on such an occasion, and how the pretty and saucy Miss said if *she* were Smith's wife she would ——. How they like to hear all about it! and how they like to question them as to how women think and feel on such and such subjects, which information they can only obtain by their wives turning state's-evidence! Of course they do; and when a bright little woman has chattered to them an hour or more, and told them more funny and amusing things than you could count, and they have laughed and enjoyed it, what return do they make? Why they just stretch their length on the sofa and go to sleep. Now I for one have borne this state of things long enough! It is all owing to that vile lethargic tobacco. Before long women will be expected to cut up their food and feed them; they will be too lazy even to eat. Now I'll tell you what I mean to do. I am going to stop giving out, and cut off supplies, till I get something back. I'll just try the monosyllabic system on John. He will say to-night, "Well, Mary, where have you been to-day? and what have you seen?" And I'll answer, bending over my work, "Oh, I went round a little, and I didn't see anything in particular." Then John will take a scrutinizing look at me, and ask if I have the headache; and I shall answer sweetly, "No, dear." Then John will try again: "Well, Mary, did you go shopping?"—"I? no—oh, no, dear. I didn't go shopping today." Another look at me, and another period of reflection. "Have you heard any bad news, Mary?"—"No, John, I hope not."—"Well—what the mischief makes you so silent? You generally have so much to tell me, and you sometimes get off a very bright thing, if you did but know it. *Something* is the matter with you; what is it?" and John will come round and peep into my face. "Oh! pshaw—*I* know; you are paying me off for not talking," he will say, half-vexed, half-repentant.

Then I shall get up on a chair, in the middle of the room, and preach after this course: "Yes, John, that's just it. You haven't an idea how stupid you've grown. I hate that lethargic tobacco! It is going to revolutionize society; women are squirrel-like creatures and can't stand it. No wonder all these spicy trials fill the papers. You needn't laugh. It takes *two* to make home bright. Don't you suppose that a woman is as much perplexed and worried and sick of the practical, at the end of the day, as a man can be? Do you suppose she always feels like giving out the last remnant of her vitality to amuse a statue? she wants a response; and she would have it, too, if a man's soul and body were not so tobacco-steeped, that every sense and feeling is merged in the one drowsy desire to let the world and everything in it, including its wives, go to the dogs. *And they are going, John!* Now, lastly and finally, I tell you and all other Johns who may read this, that it is the worst possible policy on your part, as you would see if you ever read the papers with an eye to your own firesides, which you don't. You can wonder how Smith's wife, or how Jones' wife, could ever have done thus and so; but it never enters your slow heads to ask, if the homes of these wives were silent and cheerless, and if their husbands took all their attempts to enliven them as matters of course, and gave no echo back; and that being the case, whether the bright sunbeams outside, might not glitter too temptingly for their weariness." And here I shall jump down from the chair, and, looking at John, shall see—that he is *fast asleep*!

Sometimes I sit and laugh, all by myself, over the newspapers and magazines in which the "Woman Question" is aired according to the differing views of editors and writers. For instance, one gentleman thinks that the reason the men take a nap on the sofa evenings at home, or else leave it to go to naughty places, is because there are no Madame De Staels in our midst to make home attractive. He was probably a bachelor, or he would understand that when a man who has been perplexed and fretted all day, finally reaches home, the last object he wishes to encounter is a wide-awake woman of the Madame De Stael pattern, propounding her theories on politics, theology, and literature. The veriest idiot who should entertain him by the hour with tragic accounts of broken teacups, and saucepans, would be a blessing compared to her; not that he would like that either; not that he would know himself exactly what he *would* like in such a case, except that it should be something diametrically opposite to that, which, years ago he got on his knees to solicit.

Another writer asserts that women's brains are too highly cultivated at the present day; and that they have lost their interest in the increase of the census; and that their husbands, not sharing their apathy, hence the disastrous result. I might suggest in answer that this apathy may have its foundation in the idea so fast gaining ground,—thanks to club-life, and that which answers to it in a less fashionable strata of society,—that it is an indignity to expect fathers of families to be at home, save occasionally to sleep, or eat, or to change their apparel; and that, under such circumstances, women naturally prefer to be the mother of four children, or none, than

to engineer seventeen or twenty through the perils of childhood and youth without assistance, co-operation, or sympathy.

Another writer thinks that women don't "smile" enough when their husbands come into the house; and that many a man misses having his shirt, or drawers, taken from the bureau and laid on a chair all ready to jump into, at some particular day, or hour, as he was accustomed, when he lived with some pattern sister or immaculate aunt at home. This preys on his manly intellect, and makes life the curse it is to him.

Another asserts that many women have some female friend who is very objectionable to the husband, in exerting a pugilistic effect on her mind, and that he flees his house in consequence of this unholy influence; not that this very husband wouldn't bristle all over at the idea of his wife court-martialling a bachelor, or Benedict friend, for the same reason; but then it makes a difference, you know, a man not being a woman.

Another writer asserts that nobody yet knows what woman is capable of doing. I have only to reply that the same assertion cannot be made with regard to men, as the dwellers in great cities, at least, know that the majority of them are capable of doing anything, that the devil and opportunity favor.

It has been a practice for years to father every stupid joke that travels the newspaper-round on "*Paddy*"—poor "Paddy." In the same way, it seems to me that for every married man now, who proves untrue to his better nature, *his wife* is to be held responsible. It is the old cowardly excuse that the first man alive set going, and which has been travelling round this weary world ever since. "The woman thou gavest to be with me"—*she* did thus and so; and therefore all the Adams from that time down, have whimpered, torn their hair, and rushed forth to the long-coveted perdition, over the bridge of this cowardly excuse.

TRAVEL-SPOILED AMERICANS.

HIS is one of my character tests,—to pronounce none of my fellow-creatures *wise* until they have gone through the crucible of "going abroad." So many who started with a fair average of common-sense have returned from their European tours minus this article, that I need not apologize for my views on this subject. No one can be more reverent in their admiration of all that the slow, busy ages have heaped together in the Old World of the beautiful, and scientific, and curious, and rare. But having looked at and enjoyed them,—having breathed the enervating air of luxury the appointed time,—I think I should gasp again for a strong, crisp breath of that *New* World, which is my grand birthright. You may scare up hideous abuses of to-day, and point to convulsions of all sorts that are seemingly upheaving us, root and branch. I care not. The greatest of all crimes, in my eyes, is stagnation. We are *moving*, thank God! There may be rough roads, and ruts, and stones, and rocks in the way, and some of us may be crushed, and maimed, and jolted off, and scarcely know our latitude and longitude for the fogs, and false guides, and dark clouds, and fierce storms of debate. But still we *move*! We are thinking of something beside a new way of fricasseeing frogs, or "rectifying frontiers." We are neither children or slaves. More! we have a *future* before us—grander to those who will see it than has any nation on the face of the earth. For one, I glory in it all. And when I see an American, male or female, returning to their native land, sighing for the nice little dishes one gets in Paris, dilating on its superior costuming, prating forever of "The Tuileries," and such like, and finding America "so in the rough," I want to place my arms a-kimbo, my nose within an inch of his, and my eyes focussed—anywhere—so that it will make him feel uncomfortable, and address him thus: My beloved Idiot—Did you, while abroad, ever compare the condition of the "common people," if I may be allowed to allude in your presence to so vulgar and disgusting a theme—did you ever compare the condition of the common people there with those of the same class in your own country? Did you see, in Italy, or France, or England, any such homes for the working-classes as are to be seen, for instance, in New England? Those thrifty kitchens, where neatness proclaims itself from the symmetrical wood-pile in the "shed" to the last shining pewter-plate and spoon on the well-polished dresser? Where even the old dog wipes his paws on the mat before stepping on the snowy floor; where every child can read and write, and "do chores" instead of begging its bread one half the day and lying in the sun the rest. Where the women churn, and bake, and brew, and sew, and have babies, and read books, aye, and *write* them too. My beloved Idiot, did you ever think of all *this*? Did you ever think, also, of the difference it would make in your views of "life *abroad*," if instead of going there with a pocket full of money to *spend*, you went there to *earn* it?

Aha! wouldn't your chances be splendid in *that* case?

But, Heaven bless us! what is the use of showing a mole the sun? I wish it here distinctly understood that I pause at this period of my discourse, that every discontented American, so unworthy of his glorious birthright, may get his passport, pack his trunk, and go back to his peppered frogs, and toasted horse-steak, and diseased geese livers, and liveried flunkeys, and be ingloriously content, while he makes room here for his betters.

LIFE'S ILLUSIONS.

ID you ever stop short in the midst of the grind, and toil, and whirl of life, at the thought. After all, what will this never ceasing fret of body and soul amount to? Did you ever then begin to reckon upon your fingers the unfulfilled promises of life within your knowledge, as if you had but just heard of them? First, there is your acquaintance, Mr. ——, who, since he came to years of maturity, has had but this one object: to secure a pecuniary independence for himself and his children. At fifty he has achieved it; and now he has nothing to do but to enjoy himself. But *how*? That is the question which racks his brain day and night. He has his library, to be sure; that was part of the furnishing of his house; but, alas! he has no taste for reading. He has fine pictures upon his walls; but he has no eye for their beauty. He has daughters; but they are devoured with the love of finery and fashion. He has sons; but they are emulating each other in spending money, criminally and foolishly; and now he stands aghast at the goal, to reach which he has sacrificed the better part of himself and them; his sun is setting, and he has only the ashes of the Dead Sea Apple of Victory between his fingers.

Then there is Mrs. ——, who has staked all on her beautiful young daughter. She was educated at home, for fear of the contamination of associates; she was never from under the watchful eye of her parents, lest her manners should receive a flaw. She was drilled to speak, step, look, smile, eat, and drink, according to prescribed rules. She must perfect herself in music, in the languages, in drawing. Her eyes, hands, teeth, nails, must undergo a careful supervision each day, lest any attraction should be prematurely shorn of its glory. At last she dawns into beautiful womanhood. The evening is fixed for her triumphant entrance into society. Dress-makers, hair-dressers, jewellers, and florists are called into requisition. The important toilette is finished; when suddenly the house is thrown into consternation by her violent indisposition; and before morning the young girl sleeps in her shroud.

The anguished woman groans out, "Ye have taken away my idol, and what have I left?" and she feels that life for her has nothing left but a dreary waiting for its close.

Then there are the great army of parents, whose heart-strings are wrung with pity at the little eyes which may never see, the little ears which may never hear, the little feet which may never skip or run, and the mute tongues which may never syllable the sweet words, "Father!" "Mother!" Then there are sons whose god is the wine-cup; and living daughters whose own mothers had rather look upon their dead faces. These heart-wrenchings and disappointments, are they not legion? And yet, like children, whose toys, one after another, are broken, or taken from them, we still reach out our hands for the gilded bubble of hope, all the same as if it had never burst between our fingers. When our dearly-loved children are taken from us, our torn

heart-strings hasten to twine about *their* children; forgetting the *little* feet that have also trod "the dark valley." Surely, by this love-yearning, which may never die in us, shall we find in another world than this, its uninterrupted and perfect fruition.

JACK SIMPKINS.

T is a miserable thing to be born a philanthropist. Jack Simpkins can tell you that. He thinks that one ought not to be merry, while the world is so much out of joint. When his sister Betty tells him that cheerfulness conduces to longevity, and that it is useless to make one's self miserable about inevitables, Jack lifts his eyebrows and accuses her of triviality and want of feeling. Not long since this pair went into a place which shall be nameless, for some refreshment, after an evening's public entertainment. While they were waiting to be served, Jack's eye fell on the clerk at the desk, who, pen behind his ear, was taking money and making change. "Betty," said Jack, "look at that poor devil; week in and week out, there he stands, seeing other people eat and counting money. Now, I'll be sworn he has never a holiday, and not even Sunday. Do you suppose he has, Betty?"—"I am sure I don't know," Betty replied, looking over a tempting bill of fare, with the accompaniment of an extended forefinger; "he is a *man*, isn't he? and that implies every kind of liberty. Were he a woman, and restricted to the choice of one or two occupations, and not half paid at that, I might possibly make myself unhappy about it; as it is, let us have some oysters, and be jolly."—"But," persisted Jack, "just think of his confined position, and—"—"But I don't *want* to think about it," said Betty; "this is a free country; and if he don't like his place, can't he leave it? Come, Jack, eat your oysters." To do Jack justice, he *did* eat with a will; for such a wide-spread benevolence as his is never supported on an empty stomach.

The oysters eaten, Betty congratulated herself that Jack felt more cheerful. Not a bit of it. While she stood, like a hen on one leg, waiting for him to "settle" at the clerk's desk, he remarked to the latter, in a melancholy, commiserating tone, "Your situation here must be a very tiresome and confining one; don't you find it so?"—"Not at all," replied the clerk, blandly; "quite the contrary."—"Do you ever have a holiday; do you have Sundays?" asked Jack.—"Always when I wish," replied the clerk; "but I don't care to be away much. I see the best people in the city here, and I have a great deal of good conversation." Betty smiled inwardly. It was not in human nature—certainly not in female human nature—to refrain from crowing a little over what she considered Jack's Quixotic philanthropy; and when she laughed at his waste of pity, in this case, that infatuated man replied, "Is it possible you can make merry over it, Betty? Why, to *my* mind, his not '*caring* for holidays' was the most melancholy feature of the whole thing; as showing how perfectly benumbed he must be, by such heartless exaction on the part of his employer."—"But you don't know anything about his employer," said Betty; "and it is evident that he *could* go out, any day he wished." Jack shrugged his shoulders, and replied, "Ah, yes—I know what that '*could*' means, when a man's nature is yielding; ah—yes," and he gave another deep sigh. "Well," said Betty, getting a little irritated, "*I* don't know what *you* may think, but if my

fellow-creatures are perfectly satisfied with their lot in life, I for one am not going to try to make them miserable about it." Whereupon Jack preached her a long lecture on the sin of selfishness, which quite stopped the process of oyster digestion, and sent her to bed to enjoy the horrors of a well-earned nightmare.

Once, when Betty and Jack were travelling, they stopped at a fine hotel. Everything was as perfect as skill and system could make it. Jack paid the bill, and Betty launched out in praise of the establishment. "Yes," said Jack, his face lengthening; "but I am afraid that landlord feeds his guests much better than he can afford. I don't think he charged as much as he ought in that bill of ours. I really feel as if he had cheated himself." Now, Betty's experience in this regard was entirely antagonistic to Jack's, so she replied, with an ironical and not very amiable expression, "that if the gift of a ten-dollar bill to the landlord would lighten her brother's conscience, she would be willing to engage that the former would by no means take offence at it."

Betty says that selfishness is not *her* besetting sin any more than it is Jack's; and, if you doubt it, you can ask him to transfer his glass of ale to you when he cannot get another, or you can read his daily paper before he does in the morning, and see what will come of it. She thinks it is not so much philanthropy in Jack, as that the off-side of a question has such an unconquerable attraction for him; in other words, that argument is his very breath; and, therefore, without vexing her spirit any more because he never will agree with her, she has instead made up her mind, that what side soever of a question a person takes when conversing with Jack, it is morally certain that no power in this world or the other will ever prevent *him* from going to the opposite.

"*BIDING THE LORD'S TIME.*"

F there is one piece of advice more bandied about by irresolution, imbecility, and moral cowardice than this, I should be glad to know it. As *I* take it, the Lord's time is the first chance you get. At any rate, those who act on this principle have, as a general thing, done the Lord more service than they who have folded their hands and sat down upon the stool of conservatism to "bide His time," as they call it. All the great reformers who have blessed mankind have had pioneers, who looked upon "the Lord" as a helper, not a hindrance. The stumbling-blocks which for centuries had impeded progress they vigorously set about clearing away, without stopping to cross themselves for doing that which indolent or timid bystanders excused themselves from, as an irreverence.

This stealing of heaven's livery to serve the devil in, is of all thefts the most disgusting. This "fearing to offend a weaker brother" is a plea which self-interest should know by this time is getting to be transparent. If the weaker brother can't stand on his own vacillating legs, the rest of the world can't afford to spend their whole existence in propping him. Let him lie down till he can; or till the Juggernaut wheels of progress roll sufficiently near to *force* him to spring to his feet. I don't believe in weak brothers. They had better get out of the ranks and join the sisters. It may be the choice between the frying-pan and the fire; for, after all, the silliest woman who ever cried for a ribbon knows enough to dislike the male creature who is neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. But the most trying time, when the platitude we are considering is thrust into the face by moral parrots, is when they would not lift a finger to ease the burden of a fellow-creature who is staggering and fainting before their very eyes; or when some heart-wrench is being agonized through, and your stoical consoler, who is himself impervious to every suffering save that which is purely physical, iterates in your sensitive ear, a string of such time-worn phrases, because he lacks heart to say, Poor soul—no wonder you writhe; how I wish I could comfort you! "*The Lord*"—and I say it not irreverently—is the first compassionate human arm which is thrown round the quivering sufferer when he needs it most. "*The Lord*" is the first outstretched human hand which grasps the moral suicide as the last strand of hope is parting. "*The Lord*" is the pitying human heart which draws to itself the poor outcast, and without unrolling his transgressions to the face of the broad day, stands firmly by his side, till he has won the self-respect to stand alone.

"Talk *out*!" exclaimed a little puzzled child to a foolish adult who was speaking to it in a way which it could not possibly comprehend. Talk *out*! say I, and call things by their right names. Now "*the Lord*," to my way of thinking, don't murder little babies. If a careless mother locks one up, with a cotton pinafore and a blazing fire, and goes away, I should not say over its coffin that it died by a visitation of Divine Providence. Nor when a drunken husband sends a wooden chair, and a tea-kettle, and

a small table through his wife's skull, should I say that "the Lord" had seen fit in his inscrutable will to remove Mrs. Smith from this sublunary sphere. Still—I may be hypercritical—and after all, of course, I defer to your better theological judgment—but I will say *this* much, that *my* "Lord" don't do one half the things He is charged with, every day in the year.

ONE SORT OF FOOL.

OW I like a fool—a genuine fool, who is obliviously unconscious of the fact! Life is too dull at best; a fool has his mission, and where's the harm of laughing, invulnerable as he is in his panoply of self-conceit? The fool I am thinking of this moment, however, is of the feminine gender—one who loomed upon my astounded vision in the cabin of a ferry-boat, gorgeous as a shivered rainbow, or a bed of variegated tulips, or a garden of staring sunflowers, which challenge notice, flauntingly forbidding quiet passers-by to go abstractedly on the winding way of their various duties and avocations. Thus challenged, I of course surveyed my challenger. Heavens! what an array of millinery and mantua-making was spread over that human lay-figure. What a vapid, inane face that gay bonnet framed; what big feet those cream-colored gaiters betrayed! What a sweep of flounce, and ruffle, and ribbon and lace. What an all-over consciousness of "go-to-meetin'" fixins, in every lineament and limb! What a *haven't I done it now?* in every defying glance? It was astounding. I was mentally knocked over and stultified. And as if this were not enough, the woman actually had the sacrilegious presumption to perpetuate herself in a child which she led by the hand, a little four-year-older, bedizened in orange and black, and green and blue, and pink and purple, effectually stifling all the graces of childhood, if such a mother had bequeathed any. A little tottling bunch of brilliant dry-goods, happily putting an end to its existence, however, with double handfuls of sugar-candy, which the mamma was supplying without stint or limit. Disgusted steady-going business-men gazed and sighed like a pair of bellows, as they inwardly said to themselves, in the language of that eminent philosopher, Pop Weasel, "That's the way the money goes." Young men tittered, and old matrons wondered how her kitchen closets and cupboards, her pickle and preserve jars, looked at home. Meanwhile the child, unobserved, strayed from the maternal side to take a survey of the cabin, looking curiously round, much as you have seen an organ grinder's monkey. "George Washington!" We all started patriotically at the sound of this honored name, shouted from lungs that would not have disgraced an omnibus-driver; only to collapse again, smothering with laughter, as George Washington's mamma seized him by the belt, splitting her pea-green glove in the operation, and deposited him right end up with care upon the seat by her side, well pleased with her maternal prowess, and putting only a favorable construction upon the grinning faces around her.

There's a great deal of human nature in ferryboats; but be advised by me, and don't, if you can help it, get into one early, when the inveterate expectorators are abroad, and before the ladies, "God bless 'em!" (as the men say when they shut them out after dinner), have done us the favor to clean the cabin floors with their sweeping silks and brocades. Don't get into one early in the morning, when fingers are

performing the office of combs, and quill toothpicks are rife. One is apt to be dainty at the belt at sunrise.

I suppose you have met some smooth-faced, plausible wretches, bowing and smirking you into the hottest purgatory. Now an honest enemy I know how to meet; but your malicious, mealy-mouthed, Watts'-Psalms-and-Hymns wretch, who takes your hand with his velvety palm only to tell you that your pulse is wrong, and that your father died at your age—I wonder if there *is* salvation for such?

THE FIRST BABY.

EAVEN help that poor little victim of experiments, the first baby in a family. Upon whom every new and old nostrum is tried; who is overloaded with fine clothes, and feeding; who is constantly kept in a state of excitement by *cluck*ings, and *chuck*ings, and tossings, and ticklings, till he frets from sheer nervousness; and then—is blanketed, and physicked, and steamed, till he is as limp as a thread paper. Who is kept in a gaspingly close apartment six weeks, at the instigation of one grandmother, and driven out-doors, without regard to wind or weather, the next six, at the recommendation of the other. Who is so overburdened with toys, that he would prefer at any time a chance stick or twig of his own picking from the carpet or sidewalk, and who takes to fisticuffs from sheer weariness of being fondled.

What a moral millennium to such is the advent of a second, third, and fourth baby. When young master may sneeze, and the whole neighborhood not be called to witness the phenomenon. When, if he fall, he may sprawl there at least two whole minutes without a spoiling condolence, and make the wholesome discovery that he can pick himself up whenever he gets ready. When the playthings, over which he has been sole monarch, are ruthlessly snatched by the new baby's fingers, and he is taught, what he would never else have learned,—that this world was not made for *one*. When, fifty times a day, he must wait his turn to be served, instead of bringing all the household operations to a standstill, till his real or imaginary wants are satisfied. When an over busy mother at last clips the boy's long curls, which, pretty as they were, should have been laid on the altar of common-sense long ago. No longer do his little playmates call the tears to his eyes, by shouting after him "*girl-boy*." *Now* he is one of "the fellows." There is no danger now of his being called into the parlor to be shown off to mamma's visitors, and flattered into precocious impertinence, for there is no knowing what rents are in elbows and knees, or how many coats of dirt are on his face. But meanwhile, thank heaven, he is not being spoiled, and the important process of self-education, i.e., poking his nose into everything, that he may find out the whys and wherefores, is going on. This blessed let-alone system, which, with proper limitations, is so necessary to a child at an age when its whole business should be to sleep, eat, and grow well, and which every successive birth in the family helps him to enjoy unmolested.

How surprising is the discovery to papa and mamma, and the whole troop of adulators, that the second, third and fourth baby, says, "pa-pa," "mamma," as well, and as early as that wonderful of a *first*!

How levelling and disgusting the knowledge that everybody's baby in the United States, without distinction of brown-stone-front houses, has done just that! And what fond idiots they must have appeared to lookers on, who had grown old rearing families. With what wonderment mamma now handles the first baby's robes,

where she very nearly stitched in her life, in the anxiety to have all the absurd frills and embroidery that a tyrannical precedent has enumerated in such cases. *And now look at those of Johnny*—the last! Judging by his robes, he might have been *anybody's* baby! Well, well, his eyes are as bright, and his limbs as dimpled, and his cheeks as rosy, as if his clothes were *not* sensible and plain. In short, what a thing is experience. "Let us be careful, dear," says mamma, sagely, "to teach *our* girls to do better than *we* have." As if every young couple must not go through all these mistakes for themselves, and ten to one kill one baby, before they learn how to take care of the rest.

There never was a greater mistake made than when childhood is called the happiest portion of life. I have seen a little child's breast swell with an anguish as great as would ever agitate it though it should live to four-score. Call it "a trifle" if you will, that a playmate jeered before a laughing crowd of boy judges; no verdict of after-life would be harder to bear; and when, sure of sympathy, he tells the story to some one whom he fancies will sympathize, and that man or woman or child listens with indifference, or pooh-poohs it away—do you suppose that child will ever drink a bitterer drop? I tell you *nay*, and if the rough grinding heel of the busy, insatiate world, were not on us all the time, we should know and feel it. Nor is the suffering *momentary*, as many suppose. How can it be, when some such juvenile experience often colors a whole life? I say *children suffer immensely more than is believed*. Take a child's first day at school; thrust into a crowd of uproarious mischievous little savages, shrinking, cowering, trembling away from their rude contact, with heaving chest, and tear-laden eyes, choking down the misery made so intolerable by suppression, do you tell me that is "a trifle"? Take the child who sits intensely listening to some story related between grown-up people, when suddenly his presence is recollected and the peremptory summons "to bed," is promulgated without a thought of the *wise clemency* of a reprieved ten minutes. I well remember in my days of pinafore and pantalettedom, an old maid who used to say "*that* child," in a tone that made all my curls stand on end. For years I agitated my mind with the question whether old maids went to heaven; because, strong as were my predilections for that blissful state, I was in no wise content to share them with *her*. Nor, shall I soon forget the *transition age*, when too tall for short dresses and too short for tall ones; called "nothing but a child," when I was anxious to do the stately young lady; and begged to recollect that "I was no longer a child," when a fit of obstreperous romping overtook me with a vigor I could not resist; called a goose for blushing if a man spoke to me, and "did I think he could notice such a child as me?" and begged to remember "my manners" when I bounced off next time without noticing the young man. Driven to the verge of desperation by my inability to define my place in the world, and disgusted enough with this terrestrial ball to kick it as I would any other. A few more inches to my stature, however, settled all that. *Then was my time!*

While I am on this subject, I would like to ask, why should not a child's fancy in the way of food—I refer to their intense dislike of certain things—be regarded, as much as the repugnance of an adult. I consider it a great piece of cruelty to force a child to eat things that are repulsive to it, because somebody once wrote a wise saw to the effect, "that children should eat whatever is set before them." I have often seen the poor little victims shudder and choke at sight of a bit of fat meat, or a little scum of cream on boiled milk; toothsome enough to those who like them, but in *their* case a purgatorial infliction. Whenever there is this decided antipathy, nature should be respected, *even in the person of the smallest child*; and he who would act otherwise is himself *smaller* than the child over whom he would so unjustifiably tyrannize.

There are people who, having no children of their own, resolve to adopt one. This is often well, and often ill, too. Ill—when the self-constituted parent only wants a child as he would a pet dog, and puts it through no higher course of training; when he feeds it from his own plate with choice bits, till it becomes too dainty for the chance wayside bone, and then, getting weary of the pastime, opens the door and thrusts it out to forage again in gutters and ash-heaps and street corners. Such things have been. Let none assume this sacred relation *who are not prepared for its sacrifices as well as its pleasures*—who have not counted in days of sickness, and hours of childish waywardness, and possible hereditary moral weeds to be rooted out; for these little stray waifs of humanity suffer much from these causes, physically and morally. Let no one, we say, open wide his arms and doors to it, unless God's patience be in his soul, God's all-suffering, all-forgiving love, in his heart, to weave a chord from that child's heart to his own, over which no vibration shall pass unheeded, no more than if it were bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

The phrase, "Vulgar Saints," occurs in a late work of great repute, in which the author's aristocratic tendencies stick out through some of the otherwise finest passages ever penned. "Vulgar Saints!" The term itself is a contradiction: there never was, or will be, a vulgar saint; true religion is sublimating, etherealizing. "Breeding" has nothing to do with it; there are vulgar hypocrites, but never a vulgar saint. We might carry you to old houses that never knew a carpet or piano, and leading you up the rickety stairs, into a rough chamber, show you the mother on her knees, pleading with an eloquence no college could ever teach, for her absent sailor-boy; or show you the wrinkled grandmother, who never saw a grammar, singing some old hymn which brings the tears to your eyes, and all your long-forgotten follies to daylight. *True* religion banishes vulgarity. It is calm-eyed, soft-voiced, all-pervading, like the warm sunshine. There never was a "Vulgar Saint." We don't care what are his antecedents, or where he lives, or what he eats, or what clothes he wears, or how rough are his toil-worn hands, he has that in him which lifts him far beyond turreted libraries, stained-glass windows, and softly carpeted floors, and allies him with the

angels; although through the broken roof above his head, the stars may nightly look in upon his peaceful slumbers.