

subjects it is desirable that the mind of woman should be employed during the years appropriated to study, to enable her, as the catechism has it, to do her duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call her.

Now let us premise for the information of whom it may concern, that when we speak of the training of women we do not mean the setting in order of a musical machine, for a musical box would answer that end, sometimes better than a thing with life in it; nor a drawing machine; nor do we want merely a pretty face and figure to look at, for any exhibition of wax-work will supply that desideratum; nor worst of all are we ambitious to instruct and educate an empty, frivolous, butterfly flatterer, whose only thought carefully instilled and deeply rooted, is how she may soon be, as it is often miscalled, settled in life, imagining according to the novelist's code of laws that when marriage takes place the story must end, whereas it is then only just beginning. Our inquiry is then, how woman may be best fitted for the right performance of all duties in life whether in a state of single blessedness or matrimonial misery. Here then our whole system of public education is at fault, it provides for nothing of the kind; the indispensable acquirements for a position in a household are persistently ignored to be learnt when and how they can. We maintain that in all our girls' schools every pupil should be well informed in all things relating to the house, prices of provisions, furniture, &c. Articles of wearing apparel should not be beneath their consideration; to cut out, make and repair such articles should be an acquirement of every girl in the country. She should be trained in the duties belonging to her sex, and be fitted for domestic life. We place this first because it is very important and altogether neglected, in fact despised. Girls too frequently seem to be ashamed to confess that they know anything of domestic work, "their little hands were never made to make a loaf or pie." Most girls would as soon be caught in theft as engaged in household work, and they would deem their reputation lost if known to wash, cook or scrub. Our girls should be taught that they are not to be ball-room chandeliers, street lamps, or public luminaries of any kind or description, but *household* lights diffusing more or less their benign influence according to their magnitude and the sphere in which they are placed. This part of the paper may not be wholly acceptable, but as it is written in earnestness, with the consciousness of personal failing in this very particular, it is hoped that no extremely severe criticism will follow it.

But let us proceed to the consideration of necessary elementary studies, which the country is under an obligation to supply to every child in the Province. Of course every woman in the country should be able to do three things at the least,—read distinctly, write legibly, and calculate her common expenses with exactness and facility. Some idea should be possessed of the ordinary business of life, but on this we will not touch, for practical things are to be acquired by practice, it is enough to state their importance and the means of acquiring them. Now startling as it may appear these simple acquirements are by no means commonly met with, even among those who have enjoyed what *they* would term a "liberal education." To take for example a point little likely to be questioned as indispensable,—reading distinctly; how very few read to make themselves intelligible! There are certain solid acquirements which ought to be made, without which accomplishments are worse than useless, and good reading appears to be one of these. More attention ought to be given to this branch of education, than is at all common, and care ought to be taken in the very beginning that children do not acquire those dreary tones and false intonations which may affect all their future reading. The power of reading well, that is, of entering into the sense of the author, and pronouncing his sentences intelligently and intelligibly is one of the most elegant accomplishments a woman can possess, and it is one of the rarest.

Writing legibly is our second item. We do not say writing elegantly, that is another point, we only maintain that to speak in a voice that no one can hear, and to write a hand that no one can read are two offences against society. A foolish idea has been propagated, and ought to be now nearly exhausted, that clever persons always write bad hands. By a bad hand it may be necessary to explain we do not mean an inelegant, but an illegible

hand. Now while it is granted that *some* clever persons have from carelessness or indifference been guilty in this respect, it does not follow that all are so; still less does it follow that all who choose to write illegibly are clever. The best result would be the union of elegance and legibility.

Now to our third item, Arithmetic; what? for girls! yes, for girls. Few sciences of practical utility are so badly taught as this. Truth to say it is not taught as a science founded on principles, but merely as an art requiring mechanical dexterity, a process to obtain stated answers to stated questions, and this dexterity is believed to be attainable only by a blind and slavish adherence to certain rules. We admit that rules are useful in their place, but their value is rather negative than positive; they do not enable us to work intelligently, effectually and with certainty. Principles when once fixed in the mind cannot be forgotten, but rules useless continually practised soon fade away. How frequently are we told by pupils that they once knew the rule but have now forgotten it! Rules encumber the mind, principles enlarge it; the mere working by rule narrows the intellect, and loads the mind with a mass of uncongenial matter. We have never required pupils to commit to memory arithmetical rules, being convinced that a very small proportion of arithmetical problems are capable of solution by a direct application of rules. Let children reason out a result, and throw rules to the wind, they will be the better and wiser for it; they will be rational beings and not calculating machines. No better illustration could be given of the unscientific merely mechanical character of ordinary teaching in this branch than the bewilderment which seizes a class of pupils when an arithmetical problem is put in a different form from that to which the examples in their text-books have accustomed them. Let a problem be stated in any but the stereotyped form and they are quite at a loss how to set to work. They can dash off the examples in their book by the dozen, but put the question in a form which makes a little careful reasoning necessary in order to discover what particular additions, subtractions, &c., have to be performed in solving it, and they are, to use a common expression, "brought up short," immediately. Example,—Ask a class to reduce £13 13 3, to pence, it is done in a twinkling; ask the same class the same question in this form, "How many pints of milk at 1d. a pint would pay for a cow worth £13 13 3?" is it difficult to imagine the consternation depicted on nine-tenths of the faces before us? The "oh my's," the "oh's," we can almost hear as the question is proposed. Perhaps one clever little girl among them may have a confused idea about it (better than no ideas at all), and doubtfully reproduces the previous answer, and be wonderously surprised to be told she is right; but she shows no signs of that confidence in her own work which ought to attend every such operation. Rules! rules! are a scholar's curse, especially in mathematics. The best arithmeticians we have known as pupils, are those who never learnt a rule in their lives, scarcely know what book they studied from, and can hardly say how they were taught. They can do what they want, and depend on their work, that is all they know,—and enough too. There are many girls and boys too we suppose who will learn in some sort in spite of bad teaching, and there are many teachers who know how to help on a clever and willing pupil. But what we wish to urge is, that it is the fault of the system of teaching by rule and not by principle, that the number of clever and willing pupils is comparatively so small. It is not denied that there are very great differences in the capacities of children, though these inequalities are rendered apparently much greater than they really are by the want of proper attention to the development of the natural powers in early childhood, particularly in the first stages of their instruction. But we do assert, most distinctly and most emphatically, that under a more rational system of teaching, results might be obtained in the case of ordinary pupils, and even of many who are now set down as absolutely dull and stupid, which would amaze many of the teachers among us. To teach a girl or boy the elements of arithmetic, it is not necessary that the teacher should be deeply and extensively acquainted with the higher mathematics. Certainly there is not the slightest need for him or her to have taken a high average at the examination which secured the license to teach. Not that we advance any objection