

ed by the age no less than by ourselves, and then perhaps by and by we may hope to see some fruits of our toil and pains. Of course it will be the old story of "one must sow and another will reap;" but what of that? Let us who are awake now rejoice that our eyes are opened, and work on patiently and perseveringly while we have strength and life.

In another generation we trust women will not be ashamed to own that they have aspirations and desires beyond the "daily round of their common task." The Agnodices of that day will act and work in their own character.

You have not forgotten, I hope, the story of my namesake—a young Athenian maiden, the daughter of a great physician, who from taking an intense interest in all that her father did, came at last to entertain the wish to study the science of physiology with him for her teacher. Her enthusiasm helped her to make great progress in her studies, her natural common-sense (a quality, I believe, ascribed more particularly to women), her tact, and her delicacy of perception soon raised her to a considerable height in her profession.

She determined to practise as a doctor. Imagine her position if you can. Recollect that the women of Athens never left their homes, that their apartments looked into an inner court, that they knew and heard nothing of the outside world, only going abroad to swell a religious procession or attend a funeral. Their time was wholly employed in embroidery, spinning, and in household affairs. Their sole companions were their children and their slaves. Think of Agnodice braving all her innate prejudices, donning the doctor's gown, and going out into public life. Her practice was immense, her fame great; everyone was talking of her wonderful skill and keen insight, though no one

ever suspected her sex. When she was called in to attend a sick person, she confessed her disguise by the bedside of her patient before she undertook the case, and for some time her secret was faithfully kept. But at last somehow or other it leaked out and she was discovered. I am glad to be able to bring the anecdote to a happy termination by adding that in consequence of her success in her profession, she was permitted to continue practising, and enjoyed besides the advantage of being an acknowledged physician.

Many of the arguments urged against fuller employment for women are based upon the position that women hold now. Women are too frivolous, too much given to detail, too diffuse and wordy, to attend to anything serious. They fritter away and squander their talents by confining themselves to small things and contenting themselves with small aims. They are too fond of the precept, "here a little, and there a little." Our answer is—only let us try what we can do when we endeavour to concentrate our minds upon a given subject, when we have been taught the value of habitual attention and the conservation of energy. When we are allowed something to interest us of a higher order of things than new bonnets or lawn tennis, it is not presumption to say the old charge of idleness and levity will be exploded. Only open to us the professions, and let us see what we can do.

What old Fuller said many years ago will fit us admirably now—

"The study of physic giveth wealth; the study of law giveth honours; when high birth and beauty are compelled to go on foot. To prevent such foot-travelling it is good to be mounted on a gainful vocation, to carry one out of the mire on all occasions."

Your sincere friend,

AGNODICE.