

To the Editors of *The Civilian*:

In your editorial of December 1st you touch lightly,—very lightly,—on the subject of Franchise for Women, but not so lightly as to have left out one of the questions most frequently met with during these days of agitation, by intelligent women, for a proper status in the world which the Creator has bestowed equally, and not on man alone. Man may have had the advantage of first possession, but if had been “sufficient unto himself”, why woman? This, however, is a subject older than the present franchise question, and before you have had time to reach the Town Pump, or even if you have already reached that ancient ornament, I should like to discuss with you those questions which you yourself did not care to answer: if from lack of interest in the subject, my remarks may serve to enlighten you, or if from the fact that you hold a biased opinion, they may help to convince you.

“Will a woman lose her womanliness by entering into competition with man in professional, commercial or political life? How will a woman after passing through such experiences compare in temperament and sympathy with the gentle, sweet and self-sacrificing mothers of past generations?”

Does a man, or say a father, with all his commercial and professional knowledge really impart any great amount of it to his children? Would there not be more straight dealing in business if children learned it from their mothers as part and parcel of a pure and upright life, and not receive only her “sweet and self-sacrificing” training until they grow up, and then plunge into business life with no idea that it is anything but just “business” and not to be infused with their “sweet and self-sacrificing” upbringing? Experience, as it ever has been, is the best teacher (for teachers), and as it is not a life of sweet childhood

that children are trained for, but life in the world of men and women, should not worldly matters then be taught in conjunction with the Golden Rule by experienced mothers?

And then again, a girl who has worked in an office, etc., realizes, only through experience, the importance of having dinner ready on time, the need of rest and quiet or diversion after the heavy day's work, and—the value of the hard-earned money. She knows the importance of keeping accounts and the meaning of the word “economy”. She also knows where the greatest temptations in business lie and she is prepared to warn her children of these shoals and teach them the better ways to do business. Can a woman with only a girls' school training and afternoon-tea conversational abilities and a knowledge of dish-washing and sewing know all these things? Will her boy, or girl, require no more than something to eat and wear?

“The sweet and self-sacrificing mothers of past generations!” I positively refuse to believe that the mothers of the past generations were any more sweet or self-sacrificing than the mothers of the present generation, or than the mothers of the future generations will be. But supposing they were! What seers the authors of those days were to describe the wicked people of today—the selfish, unappreciative husbands, the harsh, strict mothers, the multiplicity of crime among every class, the deserted wives and deserted husbands, the neglected children whose mothers were not out voting (nor agitating for it either); and then the family quarrels which were not over politics. Surely these were only authors' visions, not pictures from the very lives of the past generations! For then the women did not go into business, nor broaden their intellects, but were just “gentle, sweet and self-sacrificing.” These beautiful attributes must necessarily have