

instrument should be needlessly wasted. How University and Departmental Examinations may be made of value from this point of view is the question. I would suggest that the examiners for the Junior Matriculation of the University of Toronto, and that each of the various committees of the sub-examiners be required to issue yearly a Minute embodying their views and opinions on such subjects as they think should be brought before the notice of those preparing candidates for the following year's examinations: such, for example, as the general tenor of the answers, how they compare with those of preceding years, the more salient sins of omission and commission, the more glaring faults, the general trend of educational methods, etc. Such Minute, I conceive, would be welcomed by the High School masters throughout the Province. The cost of printing and distribution would be trifling, and could be easily defrayed by adding a few cents to that now truly infinitesimal fee—the two dollars.

I sincerely trust that I have not in any way betrayed the trust reposed in me as examiner, that I have not divulged or made public anything which should have been kept back. Nothing could have been farther from my intentions. I have purposely avoided references to particular instances, and have dealt as much as possible in generalisations only. An examiner has a fourfold duty to perform: one to those who engage him; one to his candidates; one to the teachers of his candidates; and one (perhaps after all the most important) to the public, who are the fathers and mothers of those candidates. This last I have here, however feebly, attempted to discharge. I believe that there are many old and experienced teachers in this Province who will bear me out when I say I believe the youth of Ontario are yearly sacrificed to that Moloch—education *falsely so called*. They pass through the fire of examinations, and think they are being "educated," and they think being "educated" means being made fit for a sphere for which they are not suited and for which they were never born. They think "education" means a smattering of two or three languages, sciences, and literatures. They think "education" means a contempt for the "humble" occupations of fathers and mothers, a striving after a "higher" walk of life, a more "exalted" "position" in the world. What is the result? I would that the public could read the answers given by the candidates at the recent University and Departmental Examinations. They would then know for themselves what is the result.

T. ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

OUR WORKING WOMEN AND THEIR EARNINGS.

UNDER this title Miss F. Mabel Robinson has contributed to the *Fortnightly* the following interesting facts concerning the employment and remuneration of women in Great Britain and on the Continent:—

AMONG European nations, none has so great a disproportion of the sexes as our own, yet the position of woman as a worker is far more readily acknowledged in Continental States than in England; and foreign women are, as a rule, trained to take part in the bread winning, and enabled to bear a share in the responsibilities of life after as much as before marriage. Men emigrate; women remain at home, sometimes through want of enterprise, more often because the care of the sick, the aged, and the helpless devolves upon them, or in deference to the wishes of their friends. In a more natural state of existence than our own the work of woman is cut out for her. She is the spinner and the weaver, the dyer, tailor, and hatter, the miller, baker, confectioner, and brewer. She tends the young cattle, milks the cows, churns the butter, and she can take part in any labour of the fields. In such communities, the question of proportion of the sexes is unimportant, though as a fact men and women—save in war-time—are usually equal in number in sparsely peopled States. But in our thickly packed and overflowing country, this simple way of living has long ceased to exist. There is no more the homestead to provide work for the women of the family, and daughters as well as sons must earn their bread away from the roof-tree. In England and Ireland forty-five and forty-seven per cent. of the working women are employed in domestic service, and in Scotland, only twenty-four; while commerce, which engages only one out of every one hundred and sixty-eight English, and one out of five hundred and forty Irish workwomen, is the business of one in every sixty in Scotland; and it must be remembered that these comparisons are not between the female populations of the three kingdoms, but between the workers who in Scotland bear a proportion of less than fifty per cent. to those of the other kingdoms. A Scotchwoman, when forced to earn her bread, looks naturally towards industrial employment, and sixty-three per cent. of Scotch working women are industrials; while in England forty-seven, and in Ireland only thirty-two per cent. are so employed. The industrial too, of Scotland, differs much from her English and Irish sisters, who are mainly needlewomen, for in the north mill-hands engaged in making textile fabrics form the largest class. It is impossible to say how many women exactly in the United Kingdom are now striving to support themselves by sewing. At the last census we know there were at least 641,000 women trying to earn their bread by their needle, and there are now 60,000 women sewing in London for daily or weekly wage. Among these the milliners command the highest remuneration; their business requires an amount of artistic talent and good training and their earnings are proportionately high; the best indoor hands in first-class houses receive a salary of £120 per annum, while a good second-class outdoor worker earns from £1 to £3 weekly during the six best months, and half that amount in the slack season. The takings of a working-dressmaker are lower: £70 is the average salary of a first-class indoor hand, and the second-class outdoor hands earn a weekly wage of from 15s. to 18s., but "workers"—girls who have not learned the business,

but who can work a machine or sew under the direction of a trained dressmaker—only make about 2s. daily. This however is the outside value of unskilled female labour in London, and is more than can be earned in the majority of purely mechanical trades, such as stamping, bleaching, folding, cementing envelopes, paper bag making, bookbinding of the commoner sort, and the like. Industrials are usually paid by the piece, so that their earnings depend upon their dexterity, a quality which varies to an almost incredible degree, for of two women working side by side, with equal industry, one will sometimes do nearly three times as much work as the other, and thus it follows that a slow worker may starve on a rate of wages which will provide an exceptionally quick one with a decent livelihood. But unhappily there are trades by which none but the very swiftest London workers can hope to gain a subsistence, and pre-eminent among these are the lower branches of plain sewing, slop tailoring, and slop dress-making. Government work, such as tailoring for soldiers and police, is little better paid than the commonest employments; fatigue great coats are now made for 10d.; and white canvas jackets, very stiff and hard to sew, for 1s. The popular circular fur lined cloaks are put together for 1s.; a price, which, considering the relative amount of labour, seems truly magnificent in comparison with the export trousers at 4½d. Low class plain sewing is even more wretchedly paid. There existed a short while since a West End shop which paid 1s. a dozen to London sempstresses for machine made Oxford shirts; and 1½d. each, buttonholes included, is a still commoner wage.

The truth is, no woman of merely average ability can make a living by tailoring or dressmaking unless she has served her apprenticeship, and thus qualified herself for high-class work. The greater part of the cheap ready-made underclothing now sold in London is done in Ireland. The largest articles, better stitched than the average 3s. 9d. to 6s. London product, are made in the country districts round Londonderry for 2s. 2d. or 26s. a dozen, most elaborately trimmed and worked. And for this price the worker has often to walk five miles from her home to receive her work and to return it when finished, carrying her bundle of finished work with her and returning with her unmade pieces. This ten mile journey is a sore addition to the burden of a half starved and weakly life. Among the small cotters the earnings of the women are often in these bad times all that the family has to depend on, and some of the most beautiful under-linen has been made literally in a pig sty by the women kind of evicted cotters. The Derry factory hands are now suffering from this country competition, and it is obvious that their cheap and excellent labour is a fatal obstacle to any hope of higher wages in London, for both in tailoring and plain sewing the Irish houses systematically undersell the English, and underbid them in competition for contracts both from Government and private dealers. To every depth there is a lower depth, and plain sewing is a lordly business compared to the manufacture of those "socks knit by the Irish peasantry" one so often sees advertised. Before the days of Mrs. Ernest Hart those of the peasantry who could not sew or labour were content to knit socks for 1s. 6d. the dozen pairs, and very glad to get the work. The knitting was never out of the women's hands, but represented 1½d., the work of a midsummer day. Lace making requires more art and is better paid; but in England this is a fast waning industry, for the number of makers of real lace was only 17,000 at the last census, against 39,000 in 1871. The causes of this decrease are patent: English lace is too poor in workmanship and design to hold its own against pretty machine laces on the one hand and really good Continental points on the other. Lace making pays well if it be really good, for the workers in the Burano school near Venice earn from one to four francs daily, while the Buckingham lace makers only get about 6d. a day. In the very small Irish lace trade things are better, the nuns who superintend the lace making spare no pains to improve the quality of the work and the designs used by the women, and by a vigorous stand against starvation wages keep up the rate of payment. A rougher sewing business that shows a tendency to fall into the hands of women is the boot and shoe making, which in 1881 employed more than 35,000 women in England and Wales alone, a proportion of one woman to every five men.

The industries of the English northern towns are akin to the Scotch; in fact each trade has its centre and district. Thus half the female bookbinders in the country live in London, and the artificial flower, mobcap, fur tippet, fancy apron, and kindred industries are mainly in the hands of London girls. In Sheffield tool making is the staple industry of women as well as men, while pins, needles, and steel pens are made almost exclusively in the districts round about Birmingham. Steel pen making is almost entirely in the hands of women who already, six years ago, were in the proportion of eleven to each man, and female pin makers are in number more than double the men. Either as a cause or a result of this both manufactures are very ill paid; and if this be the effect of female competition we cannot wonder at the dislike of men to female workers. But despite all difficulties and opposition women are forcing their way into trades that a few years since were closed against them. In France the sphere of female labour is of a higher class and consequently more remunerative; there women are employed in the watch, musical, and surgical instruments, and fancy jewellery—industries which are only in the hands of a very small proportion in England.

Schools for the technical and industrial training of girls have existed in France since the time of the Franco-Prussian war. Among other successful movements for the employment and education of women may be mentioned the opening of the Government printing press and Gobelins tapestry works, where they now receive the same rate of payment with the same privileges and pensions as the men. The French railways have also supported the movement by replacing signal-men and male booking clerks by women who receive the same wage that was formerly paid to the men.