

**TOPICS FOR WOMEN.**

**The Education of Girls.**

It is maintained alike by parents and doctors, by school teachers and school managers, says an able writer in the *Saturday Review* that the standard of girls' education, whether in secondary or elementary schools, has been placed unduly high, and the facts brought forward in support of this position seem to be beyond dispute. There are several reasons why the danger should be greater for girls than it is for boys. In the first place, the brain power in girls is developed earlier and is stimulated by a greater degree of nervous energy. A very eminent physician has said that women are now aiming at doing everything that men do, and to each thing that they aim at they bring twice the amount of eagerness that men bring. Unfortunately, in spite of all that the advocates of the equality of the sexes can say, women are not the equals of men as regards physical strength; and when they try to do the same amount of work, and throw a double mental strain into the effort the result will inevitably be seen in one form or another of physical or mental disease. What is true of women as compared with men, is still more true of girls as compared with boys. A more precocious growth of brain power naturally leads, unless very great care is taken, to an equally precocious accession of brain exhaustion. In the second place, the education of girls is governed by less rational principles than that of boys. Generations of schoolmasters have pretty well discovered what boys can advantageously do, and what they can not. Good girls' schools are things of yesterday. Everything about them is still in the experimental stage. Enthusiastic head-mistresses are keenly alive to the amount of leeway there is to make up, and they have not yet learned that an increase of speed which runs the ship upon a rock is only a proof of bad seamanship.

**Beauty and Familiarity.**

Whence comes it that a painter, if perfectly faithful to nature, possesses for us, in many cases, an extreme beauty, when the original is commonplace and uninteresting? A lover of art will go into an ecstasy of admiration over a well painted hand. He will note the perfection of the flesh tint, the accuracy with which each vein is traced, the grace of every curve, and will say, as the highest praise he can give, that it seems like a real human hand, standing out from the canvas. But, after all, it is difficult to explain wherein its special beauty lies. No doubt, the skill of the artist who can note so accurately and reproduce the exact features and details in the appearance of a hand excites marvel and admiration. But in what especially consists the beauty of the picture, when the highest praise we can give it is that it closely resembles a human hand? There is, doubtless, a certain beauty in the human hand, but it would seem to fall far short of and to differ from the unique artistic beauty which we perceive in the picture. If one who was gazing at the latter with delight were suddenly to find that it was no picture, but like Peg Woffington's portrait, a real hand inserted through a hole in the canvas, half its charm would be gone. And yet the curves, veins and flesh-tints would not be one whit less perfect. We are inclined to think that the true explanation of this is somewhat similar to a parallel phenomenon in music. A beautiful melody, if heard constantly, ceases to arouse any emotion. Our sense of the beautiful in this regard becomes dulled. But we sometimes find that if it is performed in an unaccustomed way—for instance, by an entirely new combination of instrument—our faculties become once more stimulated by this element of freshness, and our enjoyment of it is as keen as ever.

**A New Canadian Industry.**

Among the native industries developed in Canada during the era of prosperity the Toronto Silver Plate Co.'s establishment is destined to take a prominent rank. It is important not merely from the fact of its being a large new industry located in the capital of Ontario, but from its being the first establishment which has undertaken to manufacture electro silver-plated ware in all its details on the spot. For some years there have been electro plating establishments in Canada, but as they were simply branches of American factories, their goods were simply plated from "blank" (unplated metal) supplied from the head establishments on the other side. The Toronto Silver Plate Co. have confidently taken the great step of turning out their goods from the very beginning to the end within their own walls, and the impression they have already created among the Canadian trade has been most favorable—an impression due, primarily, to the style and quality of work which they have presented, but largely due also to the fact that the company were fortunate enough to secure for their superintendent the ablest and most experienced man in the Canadian trade—Mr. James A. Watt. With an experience of over 20 years and a thorough knowledge of all the difficult details of the business, no man could have been found so well fitted to take charge of such an establishment.

Being anxious to see the place in working order the writer took a King street west car and, being set down at 420, found himself in front of a new three story brick building surmounted by a cupola and having more the bright and airy appearance of a college than the prison-like forbidding piles known to the past and present generations as factory buildings. The front windows were neatly curtained, the lower stories being fitted with plate glass and, inside, the brightness and elegance of the offices, show-rooms and work-rooms struck the visitor at once. As with the main building, so with the auxiliary portions of the factory and caretaker's premises; comfort, convenience and taste seemed better studied than any new factory the writer has visited for many a day. Although it is not the writer's intention to attempt any description of the many processes employed in the work, the following notes given by the *Trader* of the factory will be interesting:

"From the mighty 'Corliss' engine of fifty horse power, that silently and apparently without effort, drives the heavy and rapidly revolving machinery, to the powerful presses, some of which are very expensive, and steam rollers, everything was of the most perfect description and gave promise of fully carrying out the wishes of the makers.

"In one department we found the moulders busy lading the liquid metal from red hot cauldrons into moulds, and turning out with great rapidity, casters, pickle and tea pot handles, and many other articles of like kind, destined to form a prominent part of the elegantly finished goods with which the show room is fast being filled. In the spinning department might be seen the wood turners making chucks, on which to turn the metal, and the metal spinners, with the help of these wooden chucks, fashioning the metal into casters, cake baskets &c., on their rapidly revolving lathes. But time would fail us to tell of the plating department with its immense vats of silver solution and its rapidly revolving electric motor, from which is generated the electricity which modern science has so well utilized in this department of the fine arts; or, of the burnishing room with its long row of men with their steel burnishers, driven with their seemingly tireless arms to the cheery music of some Moody or Sandey melody or opera song; or of the department where the designers and mould makers reign supreme, and everybody seems so quiet and studious that a novice might imagine that the workers were amusing themselves instead of working; or of the immense stock room, where shelves are loaded down with glass of every description, from the cheap plain pickle jar to the richly decorated vase or berry dish of Bohemian manufacture.

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