

THE LADIES' JOURNAL

VOL. XI. No. 1—NEW SERIES.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1891.

\$1 00 PER YEAR.

THE WOMAN OF THE PERIOD.

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A SOUND BODY.

While on every hand moral work, intellectual work, social work await every woman young or old whose life is so rich and full that it overflows into the world from the home, I am glad to see that there seems to be a growing appreciation of the importance of hygienic work as underlying all work of soul or brain. Whether for ourselves or for others, the first work toward enlarging and dignifying life is a work for the body—that body which is too often as unlike the temple in which God meant the human soul to dwell as the soul itself is unlike what He meant the dweller to be. All of us who have sought to inspire the very wretched classes with love of knowledge, or with aspirations after better morals, have already found that our first battle would have to be on another field, that we needed to conquer outposts held by filth, by foul air, by bad food, by dark and dirty dwellings, before we could approach the citadel of the soul. We have tried claps, and prayer-meetings, and Sunday-schools, and house-to-house visiting, and tracts, and have found that before these could begin their work we must send the plumber, and teach the region of the scrubbing-brush and the broom, and of light and food, and must drive out the multifarious demons of dirt before we could exorcise the demons of poverty and drink. The British public have recognized with increasing clearness, during their last fifty years of struggle against the wretchedness of lower classes, that it was largely a physical problem with which they had to deal, and that the social, moral, mental, and spiritual mischiefs have their root in bodily conditions. They were not satisfied with anything short of facts and proofs, and when these questions began to excite interest a Parliamentary committee was called for, and witnesses examined from every class and condition of life as to the real causes of disease and pauperism and death.

The facts thus brought to light were overwhelming, and when laid before the public all classes rushed to hear. Whenever the health question was to be discussed, medical societies, teachers' associations, and popular assemblies were crowded; while in America, at the same time, Dr. Edmonds, president of the London Temperance Hospital, then visiting this country, and invited to lecture in Association Hall in New York, had an audience of less than two hundred. In England his subject would have drawn thousands; while here thousands would have gone instead to hear the emotional and sensational side of the subject, as given by reformed men, who could tell but little except their own sad tales of degradation and reform. There is value in this last, no doubt, but it is striking to see how the two nations approach the subject from different sides. We were going to finish our little job up in a minute; they saw it was a life work, long and hard. We depended on social organization, on the power of sympathy, on enthusiasm, as if the great object were to get people to make promises and to raise barricades against the evil, instead of fighting it inch by inch. We looked at the surface, said we knew all about it, and only wanted to know how to get rid of it. But demons such as these are not to be circumvented by song and story and sentiment, or vanquished by a gush of enthusiasm. All these are aids, but they are all ineffective in comparison with the greater aid that is founded on the basis of actual knowledge of the body, and of its conditions of health and beauty and power; of what will strengthen and what will hurt; of what will build it up into a glorious creation of God, and what will drag it down to the haunts of evil spirits.

Turning from the sufferers in the lower to those in the higher classes of life, we find no less the hampering influence of disease. Could the women of the land, alive as they are coming to be to every mode of development and phase of progress, become thoroughly aroused to the fact that all progress



FIG. 32.—No. 4818.—LADIES' COSTUME. PRICE 35 CENTS.

Quantity of Material (21 inches wide) for 30, 32 inches, 13½ yards; 34, 36 inches, 14 yards; 38 inches, 14½ yards; 40 inches, 14¾ yards; 42 inches, 15½ yards; 44 inches, 16 yards.

Quantity of Material (42 inches wide) for 30, 32 inches, 6¾ yards; 34, 36 inches, 7 yards; 38 inches, 7½ yards; 40 inches, 7¾ yards; 44 inches, 8 yards.

FIG. 32.—In this figure is shown a lady's costume, for which, although other handsome materials may be used, velvet or plush is best suited, the first especially. The shape is a polonaise, to which the effect of a bodice is given by a belt of passementerie forming a point above a second loose or "sword-

belt," as it is called, of the same trimming, which sustains a small metal dagger, and is held close to the first belt, at the side, by loops of passementerie. This trimming also adorns the deep "panel-fold" on the right side. On both sides are large folds, and between them fall the long ends of the second belt, bringing the trimmer quite to the hem. There is a Meisei collar of small size above a still further display of the rich passementerie which decorates each side in a vest-like effect. The sleeves are moderately high on the shoulders, but tighten clingingly immediately below the small shoulder puff. The price of this pattern (No 4818) is 35 cents. It may be recommended as a garment equally adapted to a reception or dinner, or for evenings at home when seeing guests, while, with a handsome wrap, it may be worn for paying calls.

Without health the beautiful woman

ceases to be beautiful; and of little avail are all our years of training and education, if the possessor of their results is to pass her life a helpless victim of pain. Could we take out from among the young mothers of the land those who are too feeble to give their little children mother care, all the older women whose health has been broken before they have reached their prime, all the young girls who are too feeble to study and too delicate to work, the number would startle us all. We do not half know the truth about this, for three-fourths of the sufferers do not like to tell. They have learned by experience that their households do not find pleasant diversion in the recital of a woman's aches and pains. If every feeble woman made as much demand upon the family time and care and sympathy as a sick man under the same circumstance would make, we should feel the world had gone into a hospital, and the millennium for the doctors and undertakers had come. But for every hysterical woman who makes everybody about her feel and carry her pain, there are a dozen who drag their own dumbly and bravely till it carries them into their graves.

But it is something more than outspoken family selfishness that makes the complaining invalid woman dumb. The suffering she cannot overcome or hide depresses the mental atmosphere of the house. There is a protest against illness in the very air. Disease is an unnatural and abnormal thing, and health resists it as long as it can. It takes the spring out of the steps and the ring out of the fire, and hushes the voices of the little ones. And to a great extent it does this whether the invalid is patient and silent or not. The thing that is, however, we influence by what we are, not by the wish or the little we may say. "Sickness is a trial, but which no woman should permit to come over her home, if she can by possibility cure it, or keep it away. And women, we must admit, in all ages have been earnest seekers after and patrons of cures. We have supported water cures, magnetic cures, electric cures, movement cures, grape cures, mind cures, faith cures, and compound oxygen and safe kidney and liver cures. The marvel is not that we still suffer, but that we are still alive. And the result of all this experience and observation convinces that if half the time and vitality spent in seeking a cure and in learning how to endure could have been turned toward prevention, it would have given us another race. We need to become possessed by the truth that health is the great possession. Dr. Bartol opens his sermon on the mind cure by the statement that sickness and sin are twin-born, and Emerson says that in varying health we have a searching preacher of self-control.

How to secure good health therefore is one of the first problems for this generation of women. This is the demand their subject will make of those they are crowning as queens of the hearth and the home. Give us bright, fresh, kindly hearted sisters, say the lais and the little brothers in the home. Give us happy healthy faces over our cradles, play the babes, who find their heaven in mother's eyes. Give us cheer and laughter and a little fun, say the fathers, turning wearily toward their firesides at the end of a day of toil. Give us a bright word and a helping hand and your dainty touch on household ways, say the mothers who would give their lives any day to see their daughters well and strong and glad. Give us health is the cry from all the world to its women. Give us girls with a physique that will spare us the morbid brooding of discontent, the hysterical tantrum, the nervous collapse, the look of gloom from the clear wells of your eyes.

The old world is weary and travel-worn and it sits, as the Master sat over against the well of Samaria, and says, "Woman, give me to drink." The youth and health of womanhood are like a cup that holds refreshment for every thirsty and weary soul. Do not have to answer, "I have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep."

This is, as I have said, the problem of today. It is not our purpose now and here to suggest how best it can be solved. To the true seeker it will open its intricacies one by