

Courrier des Dames.

Our lady readers are invited to contribute to this department.

(Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.)

WOMAN'S WORK.

Women so amiable in themselves are never so amiable as when they are useful, and as for beauty, though men may fall in love with girls at play, there is nothing to make them stand to their love like seeing them at work. I read these words of Cobbett the other day and jotted them down, thinking that a good many of ourselves should seek to remember them. Surely in these days we want to learn the lesson that we are never so attractive as when suitably and usefully employed. Who is so lost for something to do as the girl who has just left school? She has now no occupation save a narrow circle of amusements, and what becomes to her almost a duty, the perusal of the latest novel. She settles down to her narrow life, waiting for marriage to give her new thoughts and objects in which to interest herself; should this dream not be realised her life is little else than a blank, and although society may have been adorned by her charming presence, the world is none the better for her youth and beauty. But is not this day-dreaming about marriage on the part of our girls a mistake? Hundreds of girls dare not ask themselves the question, what shall I do if father dies and I am not married? When misfortune befalls the family, or with the death of its head goes the greater part of the income, do not regrets come that opportunities for acquiring such knowledge as would make them independent of friends by contributing to the family exchequer had been allowed to pass unimproved. Our cities afford many such examples, and these should lead us to seek some useful channels of work into which the physical and mental energies of our daughters may be directed. Our most refined girls would no more be lowered by participating more largely in the active affairs of this busy life, than was Miss Florence Nightingale when she bound up the wounds of the soldiers in Scutari Hospital and spoke words of comfort to dying men.

Women everywhere are now engaging themselves in the world's affairs with wider outlook and firmer footing. In England we have ladies elbowing members of Parliament and eminent clergymen on public platforms, forming associations to promote the attainment of their "rights," and above all—and this is the special point—there is a manifest tendency among women of all ranks to do a larger amount of practical and useful work. Now, is this feeling increasing among ourselves here in Canada? Are our young ladies spending their time in tea-drinking, and balls, and a round of frivolous amusements, or are they cultivating their talents to the utmost so that they may be utilized, if necessary, in after-years in assisting to maintain the family in comfort and respectability? To families who have become reduced, this question must come home with double force. Whilst they admit that something must be done by the girls to earn a living they at the same time anxiously ask, what can they do?

This question of woman's work has, indeed, long been, and still is, attracting attention on all hands. There are many different opinions regarding it, many sides from which to view it. Many men are against women entering the professions or engaging in other pursuits usually followed only by them, thinking that it will detract from their position and render less profitable those pursuits. Others again say especially with regard to the professions, let the women try these callings, for only those who are really clever and capable will succeed. In spite of opponents, however, there are certainly many more avenues of labour open for women at the present time than in the past. Formerly there were but few ways in which a woman could earn her own living except as a needle-woman or as a governess, both wearisome occupations to body and mind. The seamstress bent early and late over her sewing to gain sufficient for her support; the governess was often badly paid and suffered, if not so much in body, more in mind from the anomalous position in which she was placed. Who has not known cases where highly-accomplished and talented ladies have been engaged in families much inferior to themselves, except in money, and where they have had to endure the overbearing and patronizing manner of some coarse, ill-bred woman, and a troop of rude and petted children? But these are not now the only paths open. In these days, and especially on this continent, we have women everywhere; behind the counter, and the desk, at the printer's case, and invading the editor's sanctum, reading law, and walking the hospitals, competing

with men in nearly every branch of business and learning, save such as require great physical strength. Better days are dawning for women, more opportunities are being granted them for work. Men are giving up the idea that women have fewer brains and less capabilities than themselves. And are they not carrying off some of the very highest prizes from our colleges and various institutions of learning? Are they not taking their places side by side with the "lords of creation," on the platform, at the school board, in the judicial courts, and at the medical consultations? These honourable positions can, however, only be won by essentially clever women. Besides, we are not all ambitious to appear as lawyers, or doctors, or force our way to public appointments. But for the humbler ones there is much to do. Let us see then in what direction woman's labour can be profitably employed. One great field lying open, and only partially occupied as yet, may be found in the stores where woman as the attentive and lively clerk soon feels at home. Already there are indications that on this continent at least shop-men will ere long be almost unknown, having surrendered the stores to their more facile rivals and gone out to till our fertile lands. Then again telegraphy, photography, type-setting, and watchmaking are among the proper avocations for women. We know that the English Government employs a large staff of female telegraph operators, who speedily prove adepts at the instruments. The Post Offices open up another field of labour which will doubtless be entered upon in due time by hundreds of the so-called weaker sex. Some few, and those more for pleasure than for profit, have turned their attention to art. In the photographer's darkened closet, in the wood engraver's shop, in the artist's studio, in the musician's room, unassuming women may be found patiently toiling during long hours to win success. Let more of us follow these good examples, and success in an enlarged degree will be ours, and the world will be the better for our work.

BLANCHE B.

DOMESTIC SERVICE.—NO FOLLOWERS ALLOWED.

A correspondent of the *Queen* makes the following sensible remarks on the habit very prevalent among house-keepers of stipulating that their servant girls shall have "no followers." "I scarcely know," she says, whether to be most astonished at the foolishness or at the unreasonableness of this stipulation. Do employers really expect that because, for board, residence, and wages, they get others to perform certain services for them, therefore these latter ought to, and will, renounce the usual feelings of humanity? Because a girl engages to sweep floors, dust rooms, light fires, &c., is it therefore taken for granted that she is a mere machine, guaranteed to perform a certain amount of work—allowed indeed to breathe, eat, speak, and sleep, but supposed to exist without affections or passions; in short, to be quite differently constituted from human beings who live in drawing-rooms? Do masters and mistresses really think that their fiat will suppress the emotions which are common to most human beings, from the occupant of the throne to the dweller in the cabin? And are they so foolish as to suppose that they can prevent love affairs by signifying that such things do not suit the convenience of employers? The assumption is utterly absurd, and the disposition implied in it is such as ought not to be borne. When the stipulation of "no followers" is made, the inevitable result generally is that the servant maids are always planning to see their lovers and admirers without the knowledge of their employers, and are likely to be more occupied with the matter than if there was no necessity for such contrivances. The extreme inconsistency of those who make this stipulation is usually sufficiently striking. Whilst the maid-servants are given to understand that they must not have "followers," the young ladies of the house are probably encouraged to do their best to attract admirers. The difference cannot fail to excite the notice of the servant girls. It ought to be always taken for granted that young men and women of every class of life will probably think about marriage, and it is only reasonable that they should have opportunities of marriage. Sensible persons will generally recognise this fact, and will not expect that because a girl enters into service she therefore gives up the idea of marrying. Indeed, as a mere matter of policy, putting sympathy and feeling out of the question, I believe masters and mistresses do well in putting no difficulties in the way of servants making marriages. A meddling, tyrannical employer is not likely to get or keep good servants. Unnecessary interference in the affairs of others is, indeed, always to be deprecated. Some worthy folk cannot be satisfied unless they constitute themselves into providences, incessantly watching over and guiding others; again, there are other people who, from a desire to exercise influence and authority, are always taking the affairs of their neighbours into keeping; but, as education and enlightenment spreads, it will be gradually recognised that each human being should judge between right and wrong for himself or herself, and that, though none of us can live to ourselves alone, yet we are each, in our separate identity, of right perfectly free.

The immense advantage which education gives sets the cultured classes in a position of superiority to those whose minds are unimproved and untrained; but the aim of every really liberal mind ought to be that of diffusing the blessings of knowledge, refinement, and

civilization as widely as possible. Instead of selfishly trying to keep the benefits of education and station to ourselves, and so to magnify the difference between ourselves and the "common people," we should feel ashamed of the narrow limits of civilization, and should endeavour to spread it around us. The more we respect the individual rights and freedom of others, in whatever position of life they may be, the more we shall be able to give that genuine and kindly sympathy which is twice blessed—"blessing him that gives and him that takes."

There is no reason why there should not be genuine friendliness between persons of different positions in life, and the manifestation of this feeling between masters and servants is sometimes very beautiful. It is something quite different from the foolish familiarity which some ill-educated or weak-minded persons cultivate with their attendants, and which is generally deteriorating, and often ends in the servant being a tyrant and a mischief-maker. The friendship I speak of must be based on mutual respect, and presupposes certain sterling qualities. I have such an instance in my mind at this moment (though the person is rather above the position of a servant)—indeed, I wish the words "master" and "servant," as a general rule, could be replaced; and I will venture to say that, if faithful and profound attachment, combined with an innate good breeding and refinement which never errs, constitutes a basis of friendship, the individual I speak of deserves to be considered as a friend by those who are fortunate enough to be the objects of a never-failing devotion.

STAYS.

The ridiculous lunatic who first brought in stays (some suppose her to have been Mademoiselle Pantline, a mistress of Marshal Saxe, others say an early Norman lady) is to blame for the first and greatest defect of modern gowns—the grotesque outline of the body.

We are not denying the necessity for some close-fitting garment as a support to the body and an improvement to the figure; but we must emphatically protest against a machine that, pretending to be a servant, is, in fact, a tyrant—that, aspiring to embrace, hugs like a bear—crushing in the ribs, and injuring the lungs and heart, the stomach, and, indeed, all internal organs. For what end? The end of looking like a wasp, and getting rid of the whole charm of graceful movement and easy carriage, the end of communicating an over-allish sensation of deformity to the spectator.

Why is a tightly-laced figure a deformity?

A small waist is a beauty, because, when it is natural, it goes together with the peculiar litheness and activity of a slenderly-built figure; but when it is artificially formed, unheard-of horrors are inseparable from it. The shoulders are palpably too broad for such a waist to support, the hips spread too suddenly from the ugly straight line (at an acute angle) between them and the armpit. And the face betrays the condition of the inside! Who can forgive the unhealthy cheek and red nose induced by such a cause? Who can forget the disease that has come or is coming? What sensible man or woman can pity the fool who faints, perhaps in the midst of a dance or conversation, from the unbearable pressure on the heart caused by her stays and girdle—or, if they pity, do not also blush for her?

The Roman dame made use of bands that afforded support without impairing the supple beauty of the body. If our women would employ such means, the bodice would express, rather than deform, the figure, and there would not be the triangular hollow between the waist and elbow which now gives so much hardness to the outline.

Tight lacing is far less general now than it was some years ago; let us hope that soon there may be no tight lacing at all, and that the cruel corset may at last disappear forever. Whatever may be said of the fashions of to-day, no one can deny that with their natural corsets, thick shoes, short dresses, and comfortable bonnets, they are far more sensible and healthful than the much-vaunted modes of our grandmothers. Those who lace tight to-day cannot throw the responsibility on the fashion, for that authorizes them to do precisely as they please.—*Harper's Bazaar*.

A lady has been appointed in England a Poor Law Inspector, at a salary of \$2,000 a year.

An ancient festival in Switzerland, *la fête des femmes*, has just been celebrated. In the second week of January it is the usage in Aargau for all the women to assume the prerogatives of "the lords of creation" for one day. The *fête* this year came off splendidly. Every woman was a man and every man was nobody.

A contemporary says: "We notice an advertisement in the *Co-operative News* which affords a delightful example of the diffusion of co-operative principles. As tradesmen are to work for nothing, and not be so wicked as to wish to live by their labour, domestic servants are to do without wages. Here is a pretty specimen of meanness: 'A lady, who would prefer giving help to becoming a servant,' and who would accept a home instead of salary, would be welcome in a small family.' A 'lady' to do the housework for nothing is a rich idea."

A Reuter's telegram from Gibraltar says:—The marriage of His Highness the Sheriff of Guazun with an English Christian lady, Miss King, took place at Tangier on the 17th inst. (Jan). The bride rode to the English Consulate on an Arab horse, covered with a scarlet saddle and cloth embroidered with gold, and was presented by the bridegroom. The marriage was merely a civil ceremony, and was performed by Sir John Drummond Hay. The bridegroom appeared in a flowing Eastern dress of

dark blue, and was escorted by a guard of Moorish soldiers to the Victoria Hotel, where all the consular body were present. His Highness has now four wives. Miss King, by her marriage to a Mahometan, forfeits all protection of the English law.

The *Court Journal* gives a singular account of a servant girl who seems to have acquired such a relish for pins and needles as to be unable to resist the temptation to swallow them. Apparently she has a constant craving for this unusual diet. Once, when hanging out some clothes to dry, she accidentally swallowed a quantity of pins she kept in her mouth. Some unpleasant symptoms appearing, she went to an hospital, whence, after vomiting twenty-eight pins, she returned to service. After a while the former symptoms returned. She was sent again to the hospital, and there no less than seventy-eight pins and sixteen needles have been taken from her body. The greater part of these she vomited, but some were taken out through her skin on different parts of her person. The needles in particular indicated a decided inclination to wander through the body, several being taken out about the face, neck, and arms. One was taken out below the ear; with a long thread after it, and another came out in three pieces, the broken parts following close in each other's wake. The pins included a large one, nearly the size of a darning-needle, and a "safety" one.

Not long ago a boat containing two men cap-sized in Huntington Bay, Long Island. One of the men, who could swim a little, succeeded in reaching the boat, which was floating bottom upward, and got upon the keel; the other could not swim at all, but clung to a mass of ice scarcely buoyant enough to sustain his weight. The accident occurred directly opposite a house in which there were three women and a little boy. They all rushed to the beach, though not knowing how to aid the man, who evidently was rapidly becoming exhausted. Then one of them, a Miss Conklin, determined to make an effort to save him, and waded out into the bay. She cleared the ice from her path with her hands, but when within a few feet of the man only her head was above water. With great heroism she plunged into the deep water, and with a few strokes reached the benumbed and almost drowning man. He was still sensible, and faithfully obeyed the instruction given him by the brave woman. She had warned him against seizing hold of her in such a manner as to impede her motions; so when she reached him he placed his hands on her shoulders, and in a few seconds, thanks to her good swimming, both stood neck deep in the ice-cold water, and began wading shoreward. When Miss Conklin reached the shore she fainted away, and was carried to the house by her relatives. She did not recover from the effects of her exertions for two or three days. The companion of the rescued man, who had clung to the keel of the boat, was safely brought ashore after other help was summoned.

It is certainly curious, says the *London Globe*, that the branch of art which, above all others, comes home to women is that from which women have hitherto kept clear. Architecture is as much the business of women and men, and yet, in all the generations of female painters, female musicians, and female poets, there have been no female architects. There may be many reasons, but the demand which architecture makes for masculine qualities cannot, in these days of womanly ambition, be taken as one of them. The only type of female architect known to the world is that represented by Miss Brooks in "Middlemarch." But she did not draw her plans for improved cottages professionally, even though she probably avoided the error of that illustrious male amateur, Balzac, who when he planned a country house for himself, forgot the necessity for a staircase. A suggestion has been thrown out on the other side of the Atlantic, to the effect that women would make excellent architects, with special reference to interior decoration. Certainly the grandest of all the arts does not flourish so marvelously in male hands that we should be justified in preventing women from trying to beat us in an open field. Perhaps their acquaintance with domestic requirements and their instinctive good taste might give us buildings that would be fairly comfortable. It might be interesting, moreover, if some lady could be induced to "give us her idea," as that eminent male architect Mr. Pecksniff would put it, of a design for the Law Courts that we are to have one of these days. After opening such a field, it surely savours of bathos to complete the suggestion by hinting that it would lead to business, and perhaps other partnerships, wise and otherwise.

MR. JAMES I. FELLOWS, ST. JOHN, N. B.—Sir: Having, while at your establishment, carefully examined your prescription, and the method of preparing your Compound Syrup, I felt anxious to give it a fair trial in my practice. For the last twelve months I have done so, and I find that in incipient consumption, and other diseases of the throat and lungs, it has done wonders. In restoring persons suffering from the effects of diphtheria, and the cough following typhoid fever, prevalent in this region, it is the best remedial agent I have ever used. But for persons suffering from exhaustion of the powers of the brain and nervous system, from which so many young men suffer, I know of no better medicine for restoration to health than your Compound Syrup. If you think this letter of any service you are at liberty to use it as you see fit.

I remain, yours, &c.,

EDWIN CLAY, M. D.

PUGWASH, N. S., January 14, 1871.

Dr. Colby's Anti-Costive and Tonic Pills supply a long-felt want.