

hospital wall the men she cared for turned to kiss before they died—the gulf would at first sight appear too vast to admit of bridging over, the distance too great to allow one point of meeting. And while such differences exist in fact we cannot wonder at any diversities of opinion that may also exist as to woman's capacity or the sphere in which she is most likely to exert it.

That an immense amount of the leaven of frivolity must be supposed to be still working among the mass of womankind is perhaps but too clearly proved by the first series of *bona fide* extracts given above, and those to whom such extracts make no appeal may be excused some indignation that so much prominence is given to the supposition, while they trust that the class most likely to be affected by them is lessening in numbers and being lifted to a higher mental and moral level with the lapse of every year; and though from the latter quotations it would almost appear that the whole female sex is engaged in a desperate competitive struggle with man, and endeavoring to usurp places and privileges which can never rightfully belong to woman; this it is needless to deny, for whatever may be the modifications of time or circumstance some bounds remain, and must ever remain, as rigidly fixed as in the hour when the Almighty Lawgiver pronounced the sentence in Eden. It is as impossible to conceive of the average mother leaving at home a sick infant, and being able to dismiss that beloved care and anxiety from her mind so far as to admit of her giving her undivided attention to the administration of impartial justice on the Bench in the case of persons entirely indifferent to her, as to suppose the possibility of an upright judge permitting private affection to influence his interpretation of evidence or the imposition of just sentence; it is as difficult to imagine a woman giving an order of battle, knowing the inevitable result of carnage and suffering, as to picture to ourselves a tried and trained commander's sympathy for those under his command interfering with his obedience to stern necessity when the time for action came. Each is assisting to carry out the design of the Author of Creation, one by that concentration of interest in and devotion to the individual proceeding from the divinely implanted instincts of maternity and tenderness necessary to the preservation of the human race and the maintenance of the pure ties of family and home, the other by that disregard of individual welfare, that subordination of all private feeling to the dictates of duty, which is essentially masculine, and needful for the exercise of public rectitude and the discharge of difficult and dangerous public trusts. But neither can there be any trenching on that fair domain which belongs to woman alone; and there are now as many useful lowly lives, as much gentle untiring and retiring self-sacrifice, as much unboasting effort, as much humble duty done silently and thoughtless of reward, as has ever been and will ever be woman's contribution to the sum of the ages.

That the time is, however, forever past when the extreme of either frivolity or humility was looked upon as woman's proper province is not more fully shown by the papers read at the International Council than by our own experience and observation of what we see around us every day. Within the recollection of the writer "Woman's Rights" was a decided cry; now far more than women then even thought of claiming has been won. The once exclusive gates of learning have been thrown open to them, and the "sweet girl graduate" is no longer only a poet's dream; the doubtful privileges of the ballot box have been in a large measure conceded, and whereas scarcely more than a generation ago the nursery and to a limited extent the school room were the only outlet for female effort outside some of the lower branches of manual labor, women are now admitted to full, if grudging, and painful if honorable fellowship in the world's wide field of toil.

Of the multiform shapes taken by that toil, and its special trials and hardships, it is not intended here to speak. Some of the higher phases have been outlined in the papers before alluded to; of others, less lofty and less known but yet more deserving of our notice and sympathy because of the product, not of choice, but of hard necessity and dire want, we get occasional and startling glimpses. With the question of labor and wages, deeply as it is affecting and exciting women at the present day, it is no part of this paper to deal, but it may be said in passing that if "women with the aid of machinery are driving men out of the labor market" the expression must mean not only that there is strife and keen competition with those who would naturally object to be dispossessed, but also that there is pressing need of entering the disputed arena. Where there is great need of work there will also be great need of money and sympathy, and this at once opens a broad field of labor to those practical women who can bring time and brain as well as material aid to the relief of those of the toiling and needy multitude who come within the reach of their influence and help. But leaving aside daily and involuntary labor as a necessity which has always existed and must exist, let us proceed to inquire into that voluntary and essentially Christian work undertaken and executed by women which is one of the marked characteristics of the present time, and endeavor to gather some testimony as to its results upon the world; and as both area and amount are far larger than can possibly be dealt with in the limits of a brief paper such as this, we will confine ourselves to what can be gleaned from the reports of our own Church, leaving out of the question the work undertaken by other religious bodies, such as that of the sisters of the Roman Church, whose devotion, however widely we may differ from their mode of thought and action, we cannot doubt; the fervent exertions of good women in the cause of temperance, and in the work of the Salvation Army.

(To be continued.)