

tion. It was evidently considered an inferior position—or rather, the position of an inferior. Woman was told that the nursery was her proper place in a tone which left no doubt but that the speaker thought very little either of her or of the nursery.

"You mind the children, that's your business; and leave learning to men." That was the kind of thing that used to be said.

"But we are changing all that now. We insist that the highest, holiest, and noblest position on earth is the position of wife and mother, and we demand that the fact shall be recognized practically as well as theoretically; we demand that the wife and mother shall receive due meed of reverence for her pains, and those who may hope to become wives and mothers shall have every advantage of education and training, mental, moral, and physical, to fit them for their sacred duties. This is the primary outcome of the woman movement, and it was certainly one which was wholly unsuspected of our enemies.

"We must not deceive ourselves. Our constant endeavor must be, not to prove ourselves right but to arrive at the truth; and truth itself, however unpalatable, aids in the search for truth most effectually. It is often said, and boldly maintained, that in point of ability women compare favorably with men. In some respects they do, no doubt; but there are other respects in which men are much superior, not because they are men, but because they have more advantages, and have turned them to good account. There are plenty of women nowadays who have had advantages, but they have not turned them to good account. They do not really interest themselves in any vital questions, and are not public-spirited at all. How very few women, comparatively speaking, read the newspapers intelligently, or trouble themselves about art or social matters to the extent of having a firm grip of such subjects? How very few can carry on any conversation worth listening to on varied topics such as men continually discuss among themselves? It is not that they lack intelligence, but simply that they do not use what they have. They let their intelligence die of atrophy for want of exercise. It is impossible for an impartial observer to maintain that the intelligence of women generally is not as well developed as the intelligence of men. All that can honestly be said of the majority of women at the present time is that the intelligence is there. We know that it is there, because we see continually what women can do when they choose to apply themselves. What they suffer from, apart from want of opportunity is apathy. They allow themselves to be overcome by intellectual indolence much more than men do; they cultivate their imaginations more than their minds, and social ambition rather than the ambition which finds expression in the pursuit of high ideals. De Quincey said that novels are the opium of the West; certainly women are the largest consumers of that form of opiate. Good fiction, in moderate quantities, does no harm, of course. It is an inestimable benefit to all of us to be able to see life through the minds of our greater writers. But there is nothing more pernicious than the habitual absorption of inferior fiction, even in small doses. It is a veritable opiate, the effect of which is stupefying. Observant people, standing by railway bookstalls waiting for trains, have often noticed with surprise the kind of stuff the average woman

buys. The average young man spends his penny on a newspaper; but the girl buys a novelette, or a cheap fashion paper, or a magazine full of short stories. At the end of the journey the young man has added some trifle to his stock of knowledge; he has found food for discussion with other men; his outlook on life is a little enlarged. But the girl has only excited her fancy, and is sighing for more sensation, for more intellectual opium; and the consequence is that, in the long run, she sinks into sensuous apathy, while the young man is making his way in the world. She gradually becomes incapable of helping herself, and as to helping others—she never dreams of such a thing. One knows this sort of girl grown elderly and always occupied with little pieces of fancy work. Her incapacity betrays itself in every relation of life, and is a misery-making factor—to be reckoned with. Travelling constantly upon a line on which there are a good many tunnels, some of them long, and all them of ill-ventilated, one has frequent occasion to anathematise this sort of person. Of course the windows should be shut the moment one enters a tunnel, but it is the rarest thing in the world for a woman sitting next to one of them to pull it up. She just sits and suffers herself, and lets everybody else suffer. This is partly, no doubt, because the habit of endurance has become so inveterate in women that they suffer patiently from causes which they might easily remove. It is the result of servile submission to evils against which they should have rebelled. But it is also the result of mental indolence. They do not trouble themselves to think.

"This is the type which the new development in women's clubs is likely to exterminate. It is too late to do much to help the intelligence of the last generation; but the new one growing up will be effected. Girls joining these clubs find themselves in a bracing mental atmosphere. Conversation runs on topics of the day, on politics, literature, and art; and they must make an effort to interest themselves, to learn, to keep up with the rest, or they find themselves left behind, nonentities.

"Debates are a special feature of the women's clubs, and they are undoubtedly a help to our general intelligence. Nothing quickens our interest, sharpens our wits, and strengthens our comprehension like discussion—especially temperate discussion, entered upon solely in order to arrive at the truth. Where women set this up as an ideal for themselves—this desire to arrive at the truth—it has helped them greatly to develop what is best in themselves and in each other. For if we require a great deal of ourselves, a high standard of excellence, we shall undoubtedly require the same of all with whom we come in contact. And so each, in our own little way, helps insensibly to beautify life, and make the world a pleasanter place to live in."

MRS. FRANK LESLIE.

This well-known journalist and woman of affairs leans strongly to the opinion that the home life is being affected by the changed conditions of society, which gives prominence to club life, hotel living and apartment life. This is what she says, also expressing the view that the husband is no longer the central power in the home, around which everything revolves, and the wife is not so wholly dependent as she was. We quote Mrs. Leslie's views:

"Apartment, hotel and club life are, I believe, among the principal influences in the weakening of home ties, and perhaps greater than any of these is the growing desire of women for a wider field of action than that bounded by the limits of the home. I believe in higher education to the broadest possible degree of culture for women as well as for men, but I am not a very strong advocate of what, in public parlance, is termed a "career" for women; for I think that, in seeking and finding a career, as women do now, they give up a great deal in the way of that tender family life that meant so much in the past. As a general rule, the woman who leaves the home to follow a public career must lay many sacrifices on the altar of gratified ambition.

"Club life among men, on the one hand, and the growth of independence among women, on the other, tend to make marriage less attractive to both sexes than it once was, and hence to a great extent do away with home ties altogether. The bachelor finds all the creature comforts of life at his club and marriage ceases to be a necessity, while the young woman, at least in some instances, is so enamored of her career that she is not willing, even though she loves a man, to give it up for the less varied and more confining life of the home. I do not think the increasing number of divorces has anything to do with the deterioration of the home. There are cases in which divorce is not only just but religious. I think the cruellest thing in the world to refuse to grant a divorce to two people who may be committing murder in their hearts and violating the most sacred traditions of the home. I do believe, however, if it were more difficult to get married, divorce would be less frequent. In England the marriage laws are more stringent than they are with us. The simplest way to get a marriage license there is to go to a registrar's office and make a formal application, but the sun must set twice on the application before the license will be granted. Even this forms a slight safeguard against marrying in haste and repenting at leisure, for the man and the woman must think at least two days about what they are going to do, which is not always the case in America.

"English home life among the middle classes is, I think, superior to ours. The Englishman's home is still his castle; and, instead of living in apartment houses and hotels, the English family clings to the separate home of its father. The Englishwoman, too, has less craving for excitement and change than her American sister. She is more reposeful. She is content to be simply wife and mother, as were her mother and grandmother. She moves contented in her 'sphere.' The husband is still the sole power to which all the family is content to bow. But, when everything has been said on either side, neither the American nor the English woman suffers by comparison. The American woman is, and always will be the brightest ornament of the home; and if it is not happy under the altered conditions, it is largely man's fault."

THE grave itself is but a covered bridge,
Leading from light to light, through a brief darkness.
LONGFELLOW.

She (enthusiastically)—"Oh, George, don't you think the greatest joy in life is the pursuit of the good, the true, and the beautiful?"
He—"That's what I am here for, my darling!"