

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

POPULAR NOTIONS OF EDUCATION.

Well really, that's all very fine soliloquised Farmer Haques, as he threw aside a copy of our circular, and proceeded to replenish a recently exhausted pipe, which had for a few moments lain dormant on the chimney piece. Now suppose, if Susan sees that fine description of the new Academy, with its accomplished teachers and talented pupils, we'll not have a moment's peace for a year to come. She is always coaxing and teasing about books and education. It's no use to tell her there is a good farm, with a fine flock of cattle in store for her. O no! her mind is elevated above such trifles! Only give me education and I'll not ask anything more, is an incessant demand. I've seen the day when hard earned property was not so lightly esteemed; the young folks now-a-days have got strange notions in their heads. It would be better for the world, if there was more work and less talk. I wish these people that raise such a hubbub about education, would just attend to their own affairs, and let other folks' business alone. What good, I like to know, would it do my daughter to spend a year or two in poring over studies that fit only for lawyers and philosophers? What country girls want to know about chemistry or philosophy? But let me see—laying aside his pipe, and resuming his spectacles—what else have I in the catalogue:—as I'm alive, if there is any astronomy and physiology! Now in the name of sense, what does a farmer's daughter want to study physiology for? I'm sure its enough for doctors to understand that; and as for astronomy, no body has any thing to do with that, except Almanac-makers. Such trash is fit to ruin the girls in Canada! Why there's neighbour Jones told me the other day, that his Lucy was freezing herself to death last winter, tracing the constellations, or some such nonsense; now, she can't even go out to milk the cows, without stopping to analyze every little insignificant flower that happens to grow in her path. She is always philosophising on something. It was only last week that she tried to make me believe, that the "Will o' the Wisp" that we all go over Sam. Morton's house the night before he died, was nothing more than a vapour rising from the marsh at the bottom of the lane. Such impudence as that, is enough to vex

any one. It always sets me mad to hear old opinions derided by upstarts. But there is a query in the matter. Farmer Lythes was always considered a sensible, thrifty man; and yet he says he is not sorry for all the expense he has been at for Lucy's education, for she is a much better house keeper than before she went to school. Her knowledge of botany has given the flower plot a much neater appearance; and the vegetable garden yields double its usual quantity. And then he went on to tell how studying chemistry had improved her in the art of cooking; now, said he, Lucy knows just how to manage the Dutch Oven, to make it bake the pastry nicely; she can tell me what kind of stove will warm the house best in the winter, and consume the least quantity of fuel; and yet, with all this, she is never idle, but seems to be always employed in endeavoring to make us all happy. It is true that she spends more time in reading, but that is atoned for by not making so many useless visits. Now I confess, there is something in the matter that puzzles me. I've always heard say that education spoils girls—that they are never fit for anything after coming home from boarding schools. Lucy must be an exception to a general rule—I would'nt like to risk my daughters.

Now, kind reader, do not laugh at the farmer's soliloquy; for it is not a solitary example of the ignorance and prejudice which prevail among the illiterate portion of our agricultural community. Although the Canadian farmer occupies a station of usefulness and respectability in our country, yet his views of female education are in many cases strangely erroneous. One who is conversant with the scenes of country life, cannot fail to mark the manifestations of this error in the daily occurrences of life. The labours of the field being ended, the farmer and his sons regale themselves with the news of the day, or the contents of some interesting book. Not so with the wife and daughters. Evening comes, but to them it brings no reprieve. Though the broom and frying-pan are laid aside, yet the spinning-wheel or knitting-needles supply their place. Thus occupied, the parties spend the long hours of evening, with scarcely an interchange of thought. Perhaps a jovial member of the literary band, discovering some amusing incident, which he imagines would call forth a smile from his laboring sisters, unwarily begins to make it known to them, but, in so doing,