

Ladies' Department.

AN IDEAL WOMAN.

She was my peer ;
No weakling girl, who would surrender will
And life and reason, with her loving heart,
To her possessor ; no soft, clinging thing
Who would find breath alone within the arms
Of a strong master, and obediently
Wait on his will in slavish carefulness ;
No fawning, cringing spaniel to attend
His royal pleasure, and account herself
Rewarded by his pats and pretty words,
But a sound woman, who, with insight keen,
Had wrought a scheme of life, and measured well
Her womanhood ; had spread before her
A fine philosophy to guide her steps.
Had won a faith to which her life was brought
In strict adjustment—brain and heart meanwhile
Working in conscious harmony and rhythm
With the great scheme of God's great universe
On toward her being's end.

—Holland.

MOTHERS AND STRONG DRINK.

We may congratulate ourselves that in this country, whatever may be the exceptions, it has nowhere been the rule for women to take alcoholic drink either at the table or between meals, except under a physician's prescription and oversight, and then but gingerly. Those ladies who have the opportunity to take wine at dinner, are, in comparison to the whole female population among us, a mere handful, and of these many decline the opportunity, and our public opinion has always been of such a decided nature that few who do avail themselves of it feel quite comfortable in taking more than a single glass, as if that act put them under suspicion, or was a concession to the destruction of others.

It is to this fortunate habit of American women in general, that the coming American race, is to owe its supremacy, the children to be born of mothers who have not impaired the action of their brains by soaking them in alcohol, or increased the action of their nerves, already stimulated by keen atmosphere and exciting life, by the exhilaration of claret or champagne. How deadly the effect of opposite habits on their part might be, can be seen from the report made to one of our legislatures by a learned physician who had investigated the subject of distraught nerves in general, and idiocy in particular. "The habits of the parents of three hundred of the idiots were learned," he says, "and one hundred and forty-five, or nearly one half, are reported as known to be habitual drunkards. Such parents, it is affirmed, give a weak and lax constitution to their children, who are consequently deficient in bodily and vital energy, and predisposed by their very organization to have cravings for alcoholic stimulants. Many of these children are feeble and live irregularly. *Having a lower vitality, they feel the want of some stimulant.* If they pursue the course of their fathers, which they have more temptation to follow and less power to avoid than the children of the temperate, they add to their hereditary weakness, and increase the tendency to idiocy in their constitution, and this they leave to their children after them. Seven idiotic children were born in one family of parents who were drunkards."

If so terrible a demonstration as this is made on the account of positive drunkenness, and that in the case of both parents, it may be a problem requiring delicate calculation to determine the amount of actual injury done to children by the use, on the part of mothers alone, of stimulants to a point that cannot be called drunkenness, if it can be called so much as exhilaration or excitement; but that it is injury, and injury of greater or less important degree, cannot be doubted under such evidence and its logical deductions; and we have reason to congratulate ourselves as a people if it is an injury that is inflicted with a comparatively inappreciable force upon the children of such a race as ours, already composed of such various strains and histories that its nervous susceptibilities may be supposed to be wrought to as high a pitch as is compatible with its physical endurance to sustain. And in that view we are glad and proud of the fact that to the great body of American mothers alcoholic stimulants present no attraction or temptation; that they regard them generally with distrust, and sometimes with abhorrence; that they will not quiet their crying babies with gin, and make them little drunkards in the cradle; that they dislike to kindle any dormant seed of evil that may be inherited by the tiny brains, they know not how, by themselves drinking beer to enrich the natural food of the weanlings; * * * that on the whole, they are, with tolerable unanimity, of the opinion that if strong drink is bad, they will have none of it; and if it is good, they are well enough without it, and will let well enough alone.

—Harper's Bazar.

What is woman's work in the Church? She thinks, loves, gives, suffers, prays and persuades. She sustains the prayer-meeting. She fills the pews; without her, what a beggarly array of emptiness! She sustains the music. She sustains the Sunday school. She sustains the pastor. If she wants a larger field, let her move the fence; nobody on the other side can hinder. Some on-looking patriarch, under an ancient vine; some callow youth, who does not know the great world's width, may protest, but her growing work will not be disturbed.—J. L. Russell.

When children accord willing obedience, then the end of family government is gained.—Hardy.

In the House of Lords the motion for the third reading of the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill has been rejected by 145 to 140 votes; the second reading was carried by 165 to 158.

"A CHRISTIAN GAVE IT TO ME."

"A Christian gave it me"—that fatal glass
Which proved the turning point. The Rubicon
Once crossed, my path was clear to ruin.
I knew its power, and I was struggling sore
Against the deadly spell. Full many a time
Had taunts of boon companions made me yield,
But grace was given to turn away from them.
And now, when I had hoped—yes hoped once more,
That health and happiness and home were mine,
A noble lady, one bright New Year's morn,
Pressed me to take a glass "just for this once,"
In honor of her hospitality.

She did not dream—how could she?—what was meant,
By drinking that one little drop of wine.
The buried craving of the days gone by
Uprose anew within me, and I fell
A victim to its power; my being seemed
As set on fire of hell, and from that hour
To this, my downward course was swift and sure.

O Christian! pause and think; was it your hand—
A sister's hand, perchance, which should have helped—
That put temptation in a brother's way?
You say, "I would not;" but you cannot tell
Their soul surroundings, who may cross your path;
You do not know, oh, then consider well,
The possibilities of every case,
And let no erring one have cause to say
That by your means he has been led astray.

—E. A. E. K.

WHAT WOMEN HAVE DONE AND ARE DOING.

At the great fair to be held in Boston, women are to have a whole acre. There will be represented the raisin culture, floriculture, needlework, dress-making, children's clothes, wall paper designs, botanical collections and other things in which woman's skill and labor have been illustrated.—*American Reformer.*

The Annual Conference of the Women's Branch of the Church of England Temperance Society was held at Exeter Hall, with Canon Ellison and Canon Leigh respectively in the chair. The reports were encouraging, and interesting papers were read by Dr. Alfred Carpenter and Mrs. Everest Poole on "Female Intemperance." The sale of liquors by grocers was especially condemned.—*Ex.*

The Young Women's Christian Association recently held its annual session in Exeter Hall, London, the venerable Lord Shaftesbury presiding. The reports were very satisfactory. There are twenty-four institutions affiliated with the London Society, besides forty branches in London, with a membership of 5,660, an increase of 1,600 over the previous year. The benefit branches number 11, and the total abstinence department has more than doubled its membership the past year. The receipts were \$15,550; expenditures \$14,685. A restaurant is to be opened in the West End, to cost \$15,000. An interesting event connected with the meeting was the presentation of a silver inkstand and pencil-case to Lord Shaftesbury.—*American Reformer.*

A young lady in Chicago has some very practical ideas about missionary work. She is a student in the Female Baptist Missionary Training School, and is not yet twenty years of age. It has been her practice for the past few months to visit the sick and destitute in the lowest and vilest slums of Chicago, entirely alone, at all hours of the day. The little figure dressed modestly in black, is known and respected by the criminal classes of the city, and in all her errands of mercy she has never once been molested or even insulted. She says that her object is first of all to do some practical good, and next to fit herself by actual experience for her life work as a missionary. Wiser people than this young girl have gone through life without getting as near the ideal of Christianity.—*Ex.*