

The Domain of Woman.

TALKS BY "TERESA."

"THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE ROCKS THE WORLD."

At last my readers are beginning to wake up to the extent of letting me know what they are doing.

It is a singular fact that no amount of polite enquiry on my part is able to elicit the smallest letter or notice from any of the secretaries of the different societies who are doing so much wonderful work, apparently "sub rosa."

But, as for giving me a little encouragement—not they—they seem to think I don't need it. They are ready enough to blame and find fault and tell me what to do, but as for coming forward and helping me a little, that seems to be the last thing they think of.

DEAR TERESA—I am surprised to see that the columns of THE CATHOLIC REGISTER are used as a means of circulating the unjust aspersions cast upon the Catholic women of Toronto in the "Domain of Woman."

Perhaps, I may be able to relieve you of one or two of the bees that are buzzing so uncomfortably in your bonnet.

Your idea of a "Woman's Auxiliary" to the St. Vincent de Paul Society reads prettily, but, unfortunately, it is not feasible and would not be in the interest of the Society's headquarters in France.

I have very great difficulties to contend with in this work, difficulties of which my readers can have no conception, and were it not for an intense sympathy with every good and worthy object, and a recognition of the necessity for the wider representation of Catholic women in the press, my will, strong as it is, would hardly be equal to the task.

"Teresa" has come to stay, and stay she will, and perhaps sooner or later, her readers will begin to recognize the fact that she can help them, that she is willing to do it, that she sympathizes with every correspondent and that she will write her sympathies and help to obtain her sympathy and help to write to her and tell her what they are doing and what they hope to do, and in short to use this department in THE REGISTER for the purpose for which it is intended.

The fact is the majority of you don't like plain speaking. We don't like a writer who comes forward and points out some of the things we know we ought to do, but that we put off doing with some excuse or other.

"Oh I never do this, or have undue thoughts," is a common thing in our minds, and if it is not expressed in so many words, and I fear many of us when making our examination of conscience, put all the sins of which we think we cannot excuse ourselves in a little heap and gloss over them; they are so many and so trifling, that they must confess to, that they really make a sort of balance sheet decidedly in our favor.

My correspondent kindly suggests that I had better go and make enquiries among the different parish priests about the societies at work under them, and when thoroughly posted in the matter give the readers of THE CATHOLIC REGISTER the benefit of my information.

For one thing I have no time for another: the clock here is no time either, and last, but by no means least, it is the duty of the different secretaries to set upon my hints and send me all the information they can about their societies.

It would be only an act of courtesy on their part to do so, and also in acknowledgment that they recognized my wish to help them.

With regard to the incident mentioned by me as having occurred to a lady who visited the St. Vincent de Paul Society on behalf of a poor family, I can only reiterate that the statement is strictly true, that the gentleman in question is incapable of "taking rise" out of anybody in such a manner, and that my correspondent has been engaged in visiting the poor in one of the most densely populated parishes in this city for years, and that not only this, but some of the Sisters have told me about the lack of proper district visiting in connection with our churches.

As for the Woman's Auxiliary, there is not the slightest necessity for them to send a joint report to the head-quarters in France, or to the St. Vincent de Paul Society or anywhere else, I am not at all surprised that the Parisian Conference should have objected to it.

I think if the Auxiliary which was formed seven years ago, came to grief on such slight grounds as those it could not have had much vitality, persistence, or success. I am not at all surprised that my dear readers, heaven knows they are plentiful enough, more's the pity, but if we are going to draw in our horns and retire into our shells every time we encounter a little discouragement, how much good are we likely to accomplish? We have, unfortunately, to contend with a good deal of prejudice against the help and assistance of women in certain enterprises, and I don't hesitate to say that such prejudice is downright nonsense. I can assure you, no doubt about it, much of the old time prejudice is wearing away and we ought to do our best to seize the opportunities that present themselves.

But what good do such correspondents as "Fair Play" expect to accomplish by writing a strain in the columns of THE REGISTER, when they are already engaged in charitable work, but to the many who never give a thought to the good they may do in this life to field the still life in this world, women must take by far the largest share in bringing it about, and therefore when I read as I sometimes do about "objections" to the admission of women to this or that society, it makes me angry.

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Every letter such as the above, brings with it its own weight of discouragement, whereas a few kind words of information designed to correct a possible wrong idea, help to lighten my work considerably, and give me the satisfaction, though my correspondents may differ with me for the nonce, yet she recognizes my evident desire to do what little good I can and sympathizes with it.

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Then there is another thing that we are exceedingly fond of doing, because it enables us to put our own opinions on the background, and that is, talking to a third person about the sins of another. It gives us a kind of superlatively good and virtuous feeling, especially if we don't happen to have been guilty ourselves of the fault for which we are blaming our neighbor. And yet, all the time, we are committing one of the meanest and most contemptible sins it is possible to imagine. But we don't think so, it never occurs to us to view our conduct in that light, we are merely indulging ourselves in the usual habit of meddling that we are better than our neighbor, because we have not committed the same kind of sin. It does not matter in the abstract, what is the kind or degree of sin; we are all sinners, and none is better than another. We have all fallen short the grace of God, some in one way and some in another.

Let us, then, beware how we judge others, and remember that the desire to do so arises from an intense repugnance to consider our own sins, from a feeling of pride and self glorification, a reluctance to admit that an accusation can come home to ourselves, and an extremely dangerous habit of looking upon some sins as worse than others because they read in kind or degree, whereas the real difference in the heinousness of sins lies in the knowledge and will of the person who commits it.

The Salvation army is in the habit of distributing several scores of copies of the "War Cry" among the patients in the General Hospital. It would be a good thing if we could distribute THE REGISTER in the same manner. The patients are not all Catholics certainly, but that does not matter, many of the Protestant patients would read the paper out of curiosity, and who knows what good might not result? Perhaps a considerable amount of prejudice might be expelled from many minds, and a foundation laid for a superstructure of after thoughts that would lead to much good.

I beg your pardon, dear reader, for introducing to your notice anything so excessive as the "War Cry" and THE REGISTER, and the Salvation Army; but, upon my word, when I see the energy of that much despised organization, I wish a little of it could be used to galvanize some of us into corresponding actively. I suppose that the "War Cry" is another vital of wrath on my untidy head. Well, I cannot help it, I don't care how much we are doing, we are still not doing half enough, or half as much as we ought to do.

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