INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION FOR OUR GIRLS.

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Second Paper.

Our Work To-Day.—To live in the present age is to bear the burden of a great responsibility. All nature is instinct with progress, and humanity is struggling to outgrow the barbarisms of the past, and win its way to that higher and more complete development toward which the spirit of the age is beckoning. Our work to-day is different from that of age past, for an advancing civilization has opened new fields for beneficent enterprise, besides awakening philanthropy. As our race climbs upward to a higher plane of thought and action, the imperfections of the past become more clearly discernible, and what then was all-sufficient is now out-grown, and the surest index of the true altitude to which civilization has attained, is the condition of its physically weaker half. A glance at the life of any nation is sufficient to reveal whether it still cherishes the barbaric belief that “might makes right,” or has achieved that loftier eminence from which men become “soft to the weak, and noble to the strong,” and regardless of the needs of all classes and conditions of society.

Ignorance and Inefficiency.—Penny, the child of ignorance and inefficiency, drives multitudes into paths of misery and vice, and thousands of blighted lives, to-day, offer up a dumb pathetic protest against the civilization which savors so strongly of barbarism. It is needless to deny this truth, for relentless facts stare us in the face on every hand. In vain shall any seek to extenuate the matter—it admits of no extenuation. It is useless to plead ignorance, for where “knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a sin,” and so it becomes incumbent upon every intelligent man and woman to study into the cause and then apply the remedy to this evil. We are told that ignorance is the root of all evil. It is true.

It is equally true that to remove any evil, we must strike at its root and exterminate that. We find, on examination, that there is ignorance and ignorance, and that while the evil of one hundred years ago was ignorance of the head, the evil of to-day is ignorance of the hands; for “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do.” A system of education which develops merely the brain and admits the all-important training of the hands to some useful, self-supporting industry, is woefully defective; is, in short, of that kind against which we have been warned, as the “little learning which is a dangerous thing.” It endangers individuals, homes and society.

A Harmful Theory.—There is a harmful theory, deeply implanted throughout the social world, which, having ignorance for its root, deserves extermination, and the sooner the better—a theory that “all men support all women,” starting from the dangerous (because false) assumption that all girls will marry, and marry well, and that, there-
fore, the only education necessary for them is the acquirement of those accomplishments which will enable them to entertain well, dress fashionably, and conduct their household affairs tolerably well. The practical application of this time-honored theory proves disastrous, both to individuals and to society. False promises can not lead to true or safe conclusions. Many women never marry; many who do are deserted or divorced; many have incompetent or dissolute husbands, and many are left widows. Untrained to any industry, ignorant of the practical means of self-support, they drift aimlessly and miserably along, fearing the future, for which they are powerless to provide. What wonder that thousands are swept down into the whirlpool of destruction by the strong, resistless tide of circumstances!

How Our Girls Are Equipped.—How is our army of young girls armed and equipped for the battle of life? Forced to the front in a hand-to-hand conflict with fate, with no munitions of war, nor an hour’s drill to prepare them for active service; with a smattering of many things, and a practical knowledge of none; pushed aside or “trod ‘neath the hoofs of the swinish multitude;” forced to fight for their bread, and from lack of training in the higher, more remunerative, branches of industry, driven down into the drudgery of the lower, with its heavy work and poor pay, until talent, ambition and hope are dead, and they themselves are consigned to the grave of oblivion, or to even the worse and more pitiless fate of becoming the living monuments of their own irreclaimable loss and shame! No memorial days, no bands with dirge-like music, no flags at half-mast, nor floral offerings for them! There is nothing heroic about their martyrdom, and the world “passes by on the other side,” with a feeling of wonder mingled with its contempt at their failure to fulfill the promise of their earlier years, “for they were bright girls at school, and graduated with honors.” Find, if you can, a more cruel cavalry, on which innocence is crucified! Is not here a great and “unpardonable sin” of omission?

Controlling Circumstances.—If circumstances control men, so may men control circumstances, and while exists one slave to any circumstance which might be controlled and we neglect to do it, we are closely akin to him who cried, in days of old, “am I my brother’s keeper?” If we cannot conquer single handed, we must unite our forces, and organize our effort until order is established with man as master, circumstance as slave. Much has been accomplished but more remains to be done.

Training Girls for Work.—During woman’s long march through the narrow fields of a few industries, she became so proficient in them, that the world fell into the natural error, perhaps, of believing that she required no farther lessons nor review of them; that they were a sort of second nature to her. And so, when wider possibilities opened before her, the work of her hands dropped from her education, and the schools alone recognized her need of mental training, thus fitting her only for the professions, which, consequently, have become largely overcrowded, leaving hundreds idle who would otherwise be employed, while those who are naturally gifted for professional lives are underpaid, because of the excessive supply of cheap labor. This is wrong. Each child should be trained at school, to that work for which he is by nature adapted. One great secret of the numbers of idlers among our young, is that they have never been placed at their own work, but have been expected to do that which was designed
for another. Our greatest teacher tells us that there is a "diversity of gifts." A child that is hopelessly dull in one branch of study may be a genius in another. Caroline Herschel, though she could never learn the multiplication table, and always carried a copy for reference in case of need, became the accomplished co-worker of her brother in his world-renowned astronomical observations, and was, herself, the discoverer of eight comets. It should be the aim of all educators to first ascertain the particular work for which each child is gifted, and next to educate it in reference to that work, and train it to do it well. How much of misdirected effort, with its consequent failure, discouragement and loss, would thus be averted!

"The labor we delight in, physics pain," sang the immortal bard. When each soul shall be free and fitted to follow the labor it delights in, what a golden age of accomplishment, and consequent happiness, will be inaugurated!

Training Schools.—Our government is now establishing industrial training schools among the Indians. That is well; one step leads to another, and may the good work go on until not a child of any nationality will be graduated from our schools without being armed and equipped with the practical knowledge necessary to win success! With all its children trained to the various trades, professions, arts and industries, our nation could no longer fail to recognize its need of opening new fields of industry. We should not, at this advanced stage of our prosperity as a nation, be longer compelled to import skilled labor, or export raw material in order that it may receive the form and finish which gives it market value.

Need of Skilled Labor.—The need of skilled labor in America is rapidly developing into a necessity as the demand for it increases. One writer states that the only cause of failure in cooperative laundries and bakeries which have been started in this country is from our dearth of skilled labor. More and more do thoughtful men and women perceive the deficiency in a system of education which does not bear more directly upon the practical needs of the vast majority of our people. Public education should surely meet the requirements of the public, and consult the greatest good to the greatest number. And there is a growing demand that industrial education be, in some way, engrafted into our public school system—a system which, though admirable in many respects so far as it goes, still involves a vast and needless expenditure of time and money by forcing all who are not to follow the professions to go abroad or enter apprenticeship in order to acquire the most useful and valuable part of their education, viz: The industrial skill necessary for their self-support; and it being impossible for thousands either go abroad or to find suitable apprenticeships, idleness is the result.

Women's Work at the Centennial. —One writer, in speaking of the Woman's department of our Centennial Exposition, says:

"Everywhere was a vast amount of pretty pettiness, which set forth in unmistakable language, how few and how small have been the methods by which women in the past, have gained a livelihood."

Yet there were signs of promise in many of their exhibits. From various schools of design, the students work gave abundant reason for foretelling a bright future for woman when she shall have wider opportunity. Fine specimens of art and skill were there. Admiraible exhibits of materia medica gave proof of her ability to compound drugs. Exquisite carving
in wood, modelling in clay and in butter proved her artistic skill. Indeed, could woman's work have been gleaned from among that of her employers—and placed by itself in one department—a most interesting feature would have been added to the exposition. But, alas, small space would have been required for the work of our own country-women!

Technical Schools.—Why is this? Are the women of America less gifted, less intelligent or persevering, than are their sisters of the old world? No. In many respects they are superior, and blessed with greater advantages; but America has few schools of design, and fewer technical schools. In Europe both are numerous and excellent, teaching millions of girls and women who study science and art, as practically applied to the industries. This is the secret of their success: Their art schools are established by government, and supported by yearly appropriation. At the South Kensington museum, London, 100,000 students receive free instruction every year in the industrial and fine arts. There are more women than men students, and their success is said to be greater, as the fine work is so fitted to their more refined touch and delicate perception. In the United States no such national provision exists. The want is partly supplied by private benevolence and enterprise, but the vast majority of our students of the fine or industrial arts are forced to go abroad. Can we afford this? To what wiser use could a portion of our vast revenues be devoted than to the practical education of our children?

Manual Training.—The kindergarten method teaches the smallest ones how to use their hands and discriminate forms and colors, and the more difficult and useful manual training should be taught with the correspondingly advancing grades of mental development throughout the entire course of study, until, at the last year of school, the senior class should have gained such mastery over hand and brain as to accomplish separate and difficult feats with both simultaneously. This would give them power to continue study through life, and in a country where the poorest child may be elevated to the highest position is specially needed. It is a false idea that one must be locked in a room with one's books in order to acquire learning, and labor should not be so new and strange as to absorb one's entire thought and attention. Let us profit by such grand examples as that of the earnest student at his forge who used his brains on other problems than what his hands were forming, and of our hero who revolved in his brain the mighty problems of a nation while splitting rails! Elihu Burritt and Abraham Lincoln were marked exceptions of natural power of concentration of thought; but it can be acquired, and its value can never be over-estimated. Train the hands until they perform their tasks mechanically and accurately, not enslaving the mind. A good beginning to this training is the compulsory drawing in many of our schools. Also, a few schools of design have been established here, as well as art schools, cooking schools, schools of wood carving, pottery, sculpture, etc. Our industrial exposition was a great and valuable object lesson, and awakened in many minds a "divine discontent" with our present order of things, demonstrating that we are far behind the older nations in giving that finish to our work which so adds to its beauty and market value.

The Economic Standpoint.—One of our New England manufacturers states that the designs used in his factories alone cost forty thousand dollars,
every cent of which goes to Europe; and he adds farther that the same designs might have been produced at a cost of less than five thousand dollars, within a mile of his mills, had an art school been maintained there for five years. The proverbial Yankee will disappoint the world, if he fails to catch the drift of that fact, and to make its practical application. But, after all, the economic is the lowest possible standpoint from which to urge this reform. One authority upon this subject says that, as suitable occupations are provided for girls and women, the worst evils which afflict society rapidly diminish. Surely then every mother and every father and philanthropist should labor to supply them.

Duty of Parents.—The old-time prejudices against women’s entering the various fields of labor have melted away, one by one, till she now stands within the gates of nearly all. But it is for the masses we plead—for those who have not the strength, courage and ability to surmount the obstacles which still obstruct their way. It certainly is the duty as well as the privilege of parents to tenderly guard and cherish their little ones, and when they begin to walk to remove every danger from before them, and especially to see that they do not wander out into the streets alone.

Duty of the Nation.—As with the individual, so with the nation, and for America to neglect teaching its multitudes of children how to walk or even stand unsupported, while thousands of them must inevitably be forced out into the hurrying, dangerous “highways of life,” alone—(or perchance with others even more helpless than themselves to care for)—is to “out-Herod Herod,” in a wholesale “massacre of the innocents.” But it is sometimes objected: “If the State and nation provide the intellectual training, it is the duty of fathers and mothers to see that their children become self-supporting.” Under the old custom when children were expected and compelled to follow the vocation of their father this was practical; but now the child may choose to learn that of which its parents are entirely ignorant, and they might not have the means to import teachers, or send pupils to Europe.

Face the Facts.—Many industries, which, in former days, were considered as belonging exclusively to woman, are now invaded by her brother, and she is obliged to meet with his powerful, and oft-times overpowerful competition. Laundry work, baking, weaving, spinning, knitting, butter and cheese making, even millinery and dress making—nearly all occupations that are on a large and paying scale are conducted by men. Not that we complain of this—far from it; but we must face the facts, and adjust ourselves to these new conditions, and see to it that they do not result in that direct evil, enforced idleness to any class. Let other industries be established, with schools of training which shall enable our children to labor in them successfully! Intelligent work drives out drudgery; breaks the chains and sets free the slaves of circumstances, leaving time and strength for other things besides the desperate, unremitting struggle for a bare existence. And the reasonable exercise of all our faculties, mental and spiritual, as well as physical, is essential for their proper and symmetrical development. Says one authority:

“Nervous diseases of every kind are often caused by too close confinement to a most narrow circle of thought and duty, and here is the explanation of the large proportion of farmers’ wives in our insane asylums.”
Schools to Teach House-keeping.—This brings us to the special need for establishing schools of training in the domestic industries, and for providing all the agitation and light necessary to hasten the evolution of the several distinct spheres of labor now involved in chaos which fills and over-shadows our kitchens. The girl of the period is educated beyond not the work itself, but clumsy methods of doing it are taught, or the barbarous ideas of carrying on four or five separate trades at once; and when she drifts into the farm house as mistress of its present conglomerate house-keeping, she is at once submerged in a chaos which is, indeed, “without form, and void” of light, being filled with the darkness of despair to her unaccustomed vision. Where now shall she look for help? The “other girls” argue, as she herself has lately done, that in the few hours, better pay and social privileges of other employments, are more time, means and opportunity for rest and recreation; and their reasoning is full of the unanswerable logic of truth. For, despite the elegant arguments in favor of quiet home-life, healthfulness of country living, with its pure air and water, abundance of milk, fresh vegetables and fruits (all true), still there is a grim skeleton in the closet, which “will not down” nor out, but which drives the girls out of our kitchens into other fields of employment. While other classes of work have their regular hours, the hired girls work is variegated as is that of her mistress, and, like hers, is never done, and instead of having fixed rules, depends too often upon the caprice of her employers or their children.

Social Ostracism.—Socially she is ostracized—a shame, but a fact. The State has much to do with the social ostracism of any class of laborers. So long as any government legalizes moral impurity and sin, and attaches manual training to its penal institutions alone, it degrades labor, and places a premium on vice. Labor is honorable, and should be elevated, not degraded. Vice is dishonorable and should not be made respectable by laws which justify the wicked for reward of license. Even though society blindly cherish that relic of barbarism, the false and pernicious idea that to be a lady one must shun certain classes of honest, useful work, we have a right to expect better statesmanship from the few who are chosen and trusted to legislate for the many. The girl who in a factory, a store, a bakery, or in any other systemized and respectable work, would be called first class help, rebels here at once, and leaves our kitchens to go, perhaps, to the city, too often to follow a life of gilded misery. Or, perhaps, the girl is wholly incompetent, her industrial education having been left entirely to her mother, and that mother a foreigner with little or no idea of American methods of housework; probably spending much of her time and strength in field labor, therefore accustomed to slide through her indoors work with all possible dispatch. With this class of help the unfortunate mistress is reduced to a choice of two evils, and, choosing the least, sends the girl home, much as she needs help, preferring to do her work alone. We all have seen domestics who needed reorganizing. The same is true, alas, of mistresses.

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Necessity of Manual Training.—Every intelligent woman who is mistress of a home sees the necessity of manual training in the various and diverse departments of labor which surround her, both for herself and for the
help she so needs, but which, under existing circumstances, it is so often impossible to secure. And so it is that our army of sweet girl graduates who enter this battle field of labor are at once forced into active service with little or no training or re-enforcements. Amid the dust and smoke of battle, in their war against dirt and disorder, they must also attend to the culinary department, in itself a varied and extended industry, including several separate and distinct branches of labor; to the making and mending of garments; to the laundering, dairying, fruit-picking, canning, preserving and pickling; to the setting and clearing away of tables; the washing, wiping and putting away of dishes, three times a day, for 365 days in the year, and one additional day for every fourth year. And more than all, there come the work, the care, the ceaseless anxiety and responsibility of raising her family of children.

**Strength and Brains Needed.**—Roasting in the kitchen, chilled in the ice-house or cellar, needed in the nursery, the poor, distracted, despairing mother needs a leviathan for strength, and a Napoleon for brains, to conduct her warfare amid this labyrinth of difficulty and danger.

As the girls with brains are rapidly deserting our kitchen ranks, we must capture our leviathan in the iron harness of steam-propelled machinery, with a few trained keepers to superintend his labors; and the Napoleon who shall lead our despondent army safely through these, narrow, steep and dangerous deiles onward and upward to victory is industrial education, with its more civilized method of warfare—organized cooperation.

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**TO IMPROVE OUR COUNTRY SOCIAL LIFE.**

By Mrs. J. A. CLARK, Jefferson County, Wis.

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**Third Paper,**

Farmers in Town.—I read, not long since, in a Chicago paper, a complaint that social life among the farmers was dying out; and one of the reasons given was that so many of our well-to-do farmers are in the habit, when they have things fixed comfortably and to suit them on the farms, of letting them, and moving to far less pleasant quarters in town. In fact, in every village you can see something like a half dozen men, gentlemen farmers I suppose one should call them, men who own broad acres and homes having every comfort, who have let them to tenants, and now live in some small house, on a back street, industriously doing nothing, and who propose to spend the remainder of their lives in this cheerful occupation.

**Country vs. City Life.—**I am not blaming these men; they know what they want, and are able to have it. But it seems to me there is something wrong about our social system, to cause such a