

The task is by no means hopeless. The bribe-taking alderman, the bribe-giving director, will not pick your pocket. Can they not be taught to regard these acts as alike? It is largely a matter of education. We have heard a man inveigh against political dishonesty while he wore a suit of clothes which he had smuggled through the custom-house. No lesson can be more important than that which teaches us to distinguish accurately between honesty and dishonesty. A proper regard for truth and honesty is the fundamental virtue. A nation of drunkards would be Utopia itself in comparison with a nation of cheats, and the character of a nation cannot be better than that of the individuals who compose it.

But let us come to the practical suggestion to which all the above is prelude. Why should we not establish an American Society for the Promotion of Political Honesty? Such an association could have branches in all our prominent cities. It could have committees on the enforcement of penal laws, on legislation, on education. It could exert its influence through the press and through our school boards. Before long it would gain the fear, if not the respect, of our political parties, and the movement once begun would not end until political corruption had ceased to be a national sin.

Ernest H. Crosby.

Another Side of the Woman's Work Question.

It is a cheering sign for the great army of women who are obliged to earn their livelihood, that the "woman question" is being agitated in the light of woman's work. The question of what she is paid; of what she ought to be paid; of what she does; and, above all, "What shall she do?" is filling our papers and our councils.

But there is a side which, it seems to me, as a practical working and self-supporting woman, is very little considered. This is the question, "How does she do it, and how should it be done?"

It is my belief, strengthened by experience and observation, as well as by conversations with those who look at the question from a practical and business point of view rather than from a sentimental one, that one great drawback to woman's success in the business world — I mean equal success with man — is in her want of thoroughness, both in preparation for her work and in carrying it out. Women generally, as a mass, look upon self-support and labor as a thing to be avoided, and, only too often, to be ashamed of. It is a melancholy comment upon this assertion that, in the recent census in one of our large cities, the house-to-house census declared that the number of women who earned their living or were engaged in some daily, wage-earning avocation was only about half of that which the census of the female employees in business houses and factories declared. Can woman complain that she is not considered equal with man in the wage-earning world, if she herself takes so little interest and pride in her work that she denies it? The truth is, that woman, *en masse*, has for so short a time been supporting herself in any way which takes her out of the seclusion of the household that she is, *en masse*, ashamed of it.

Of course, there are many noble exceptions, but

the exceptions themselves will acknowledge the truth of the assertion. This being the fact, is it to be supposed that woman can claim the same regard as a wage-earning factor as if she took the pride in her work that a man does? Man has hundreds of years the advantage of us: he has the hereditary business instinct and training, the wholesome pride in honest work which comes from tradition and custom; and therefore he is that much more valuable than the woman who merely takes it up as a makeshift till she can be supported by some one else, or who has never given any thought to the subject, and so drudges on, poorly paid, but still, perhaps, paid as much as she is worth.

That there are thousands of ill-paid women, there can be no question or shadow of a doubt. But is not this rather because these thousands of women only do work which requires no skill beyond that possessed by every other woman; which requires no special training, and which, if she abandons it, any other woman can do as well?

The woman physician is as well paid as the man. I know a woman who is a dentist who makes more than most men in the profession. The woman who is an author, a painter, an actress, or a singer is as well paid as a man of equal talent and opportunity. To go lower in the scale of talent, the dressmaker, the milliner, the skilled female worker in our factories, is paid on the average as well as the male. A woman who is a good weaver is well paid; and while I am open to correction on this point, my understanding is that in all mill work, where skill and knowledge of the business is necessary, the woman operative is almost as well paid as the men engaged in the same work. She is at least recognized in labor unions and in strikes. That there is, and naturally will be, the slight difference in the pay given which comes from the man having been so long in the field is a thing which will right itself only in time.

But I would say, Let a girl feel that it is as natural and praiseworthy for her to earn her living as that her brother should; that if she would be as well paid as her brother she must be willing to give the same time, attention, effort, and endeavor to make herself a success and valuable to her employer as her brother does. She must be *thorough*. Any woman can measure a yard of muslin or can hand out books from a circulating library, any woman can work a sewing-machine; and any woman who does these things in the way that they are ordinarily done is as well paid as her brother who does the same things in the same way, and is so often contemptuously called a "counter-jumper." The men who earn good salaries as retail salesmen are men who, by years of attention to the qualities of goods and the desires of the market, combined with an amount of tact which would do credit to a successful diplomat, have made themselves a place which is open to every woman who will devote the same number of years of patient endeavor and ability. There are some such women, and they are well paid. Let a woman devote to this branch of business the amount of tact, *finesse*, patience, and taste which she doubtless possesses to a greater degree than a man, and she will almost always succeed.

I have said that the great trouble with this matter of woman's labor and woman's pay is that women do

not take up things which are in themselves valuable, nor do they give such effort to make themselves thoroughly valuable as men do. In regard to the first of these statements, it may be said that business is business. There can be no sentimentality in it. The law of supply and demand is inexorable. If there are twenty or fifty women to fill a position which any one of them can fill as well as another, no one of them will be well paid. In regard to the second, men make a study of their business, as a thing with which they wish to support themselves and their prospective or actual families—as a means to wealth. A woman, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, takes some business which will enable her to help herself till she marries. The hundredth woman is the well-paid one. Here lies the great trouble. Every woman, or nearly every woman, looks upon labor as an evil to be borne as lightly as possible till it can be shouldered upon a man. And at last, some sad day, she wakes up to a realization of the fact that there are not enough men to go around, and that she is stranded on the shore of low-waged incompetency. Some then make a noble struggle and retrieve their lost ground; and this is the reason that nearly all the well-paid women in our stores are those who by reason of their years have come to a realizing sense that probably no man will ever support them, and that they must carry the load themselves. As to that sad and weary army of sewing women, whose toil and hard lot brings tears to our eyes, it is mostly made up of those women who have never learned any real business; who have married, and, left widowed with little children to care for, and not the means to embark in that other weary business of boarding-house keeping, are obliged to take to that one thing which they as well as thousands of other women can do. They are forever handicapped.

Women do not usually—I say it with regret—put their hearts into their work as men do. They look upon it as a temporary affair, and so—as I have been told by both men and women who employ both men and women—they are not worth as much as a man, who wants to stick at the work.

There is but one remedy for this. As I have said before, let our young women and girls be taught that it is as necessary for them to know how to earn their livings with some true business as it is for their brothers.

Do not bring them up to believe that marriage is the aim of a woman's life any more than it is of a man's, or that it is more honorable and dignified than work. Let them learn one of the hundred real trades or employments which women can learn; let them feel that the better they can do their work the more account they will be in the world and the more respected; that they should put their whole hearts into their employment and make themselves valuable as working factors, leaving marriage to come or not as they and fate will; and then, and not till then, they will become as valuable working factors as men, who already do all this. There is always room and good pay at the top. Value will command value, and a dollar's worth will generally bring a dollar.

(I must make one parenthesis and one exception here, and that is with regard to the respective pay of men and women teachers. That the discrepancy in this is as great as it is unjust I do not pretend to deny; and the only reason I can give for it, according to my

view, is, that there are too many women who wish to be teachers. It is the great refuge for every woman who has a fair education and wishes to earn her living in a "genteel" manner. The market is glutted with women teachers.)

As I have said before, man has the advantage of possession; life is the survival of the fittest; and since man has the vantage ground, only those women who are armed with the same weapons, have the same determination to succeed and the same stake to lose, will gain the same footing. I do not mean to accuse man of any more injustice than comes of this struggle for life; as I have said, business is business. No man pays for anything more than he is compelled to pay. Let our girls become really thorough saleswomen, both wholesale and retail, even if it comes to traveling; let them practically learn printing, engraving, designing, light cabinet-work, stenography, book-keeping, watch-making, goldsmithing, dressmaking (at which the practical woman sometimes makes a fortune)—any of the hundreds of things for which their nimble and delicate fingers, native wit and taste, quick perceptions and faithful perseverance, fit them, and let them learn it as a business, thoroughly, honorably, with the determination to be first-class workwomen, and soon they will share the pay as well as the work of men. And believe me, our girl will be no less fitted to be a good, loving wife and mother, if she sees fit to marry; and she will not be driven into a thoughtless marriage to escape the drudgery of earning the pittance which will not support her, nor of making a sacrifice which is generally considered to be even more disgraceful than that. Think of this, you who bemoan the thousands of unhappy marriages and the frequency of divorce. And if she is left, as so many women are left, with children depending on her for support, she is in no worse condition than the widower who is left with them to care for. Think of this, you who may be widows.

I will say here that men have objected to this idea, saying that if women are self-supporting they will not care to marry. Surely, I reply, if a man depends upon his money alone to attract and keep, the time has arrived when woman should compel him to make himself worthy of her love and her possession.

There are many bright instances where women have met and understood this condition of affairs, and have gone to work like men and made themselves valuable. They have something which they can do better than other women and as well as a man. And I am glad to say that my experience has been that such women are admired, appreciated, and valued. As one old business man said to me, "If you want a faithful, trustworthy employee, have a woman who understands her business." Woman has every element of success in her; teach her to bring it to bear on the situation.

L. E. Holman.

Home Rule and Culture.

SHOULD the hoped-for "Reorganization of the British Empire" include "Home Rule" for Ireland, with representation in the Imperial Parliament, not the least interesting of the phenomena following it in Ireland will be the revival of national culture, especially in fine and industrial art. Travelers in Switzerland, in