

THE FAMILY PARLIAMENT.

[RULES OF DEBATE.—*The course of debate will be as follows:—Two principal speakers holding opposite views on the question discussed will be selected by the Editor; the argument of each to occupy about a page of the MAGAZINE. Readers of the MAGAZINE will then be invited to express their own views on the subject, to the Editor, who will at his discretion select some of the most suitable and concise of these communications for publication in a subsequent Part of the MAGAZINE. The opener of the Debate is to have the right of reply. The Editor's duty will be to act as a kind of "Mr. Speaker," consequently, while preserving due order in the discussion, he will not be held to endorse any opinions that may be expressed on either side, each debater being responsible for his own views.*]

QUESTION I.—HOME LIFE *VERSUS* PUBLIC LIFE FOR GIRLS.

OPENER'S SPEECH.

IN FAVOUR OF HOME LIFE.

MR. SPEAKER,

I suppose, Sir, it has frequently happened to each one of us to waste words over an argument, and to discover after an hour's talk that, except as regards mere side-issues, we and our opponent are agreed after all. In order that such a climax may be avoided on this occasion, let me introduce my arguments in favour of the superiority of Home Life over Public Life for the girls of our land by defining clearly what is intended by the two contrasted terms, and by drawing a broad line of demarcation between them.

First, I want it to be understood that, for the present purpose, the term "girls" is limited in meaning, and is intended to include only those members of the female sex who, having practically finished their education, are dependent to some extent on their own exertions for a livelihood. It will at once be seen that this definition is broad enough to include young women of all classes in life, and of all degrees of education.

Secondly, when I speak of "Home Life," I do not wish you to have in your mind that pleasant time of ease, pleasure, or even voluntary work under the parental roof which is the fortunate lot of so many girls of the upper and middle classes in an old and wealthy country. Probably it will be conceded by all that in the majority of cases, where there exists no necessity in any other direction, *that* life is the most to be desired for our girls which exposes them least to the dangers of the world, and keeps them the most closely within their mothers' care; provided always, however, that their days are not days of selfish ease and indolence, of continual pleasure and wasteful luxury. But *all* girls are not thus privileged; indeed, for the larger proportion of them the time comes when childhood must be left behind, and, taking upon themselves wider responsibilities, they are compelled to earn their own living, either in whole or in part. They may do this in one or other of two ways, according to their education and position—either in the home (not necessarily *at* home, mark!) or in public. Those who elect for home life may become actual home-helpers (assistants to their parents in multitudinous ways), domestic servants, sempstresses, dressmakers, milliners, nurses

(home and hospital), lady-helps, companions, governesses, makers of fancy work, authors, art-workers of all kinds. And so, too, those who choose a public life number in their ranks factory-girls, waitresses, assistants in shops, saleswomen (wholesale and retail), clerks (Government and general), and numerous other workers in the busy world.

Thus, Sir, do I wish to define my subject; now for the arguments, positive and negative, in favour of Home Life.

Home life brings fewer temptations to evil and is more conducive to moral health. To leave altogether out of the question those who work in their own home and under their mother's watchful eye, compare, for example's sake, such fairly representative cases as those of domestic servants and factory-girls. The moral and spiritual welfare of the former is, presumably, looked after by their mistresses. I say presumably; whether it is so generally, raises another question not now to be discussed. On the other hand, if factory-girls accomplish their allotted work, it is altogether the exception for employers or overseers to trouble one whit about their moral good or the occupations of their leisure hours. This I assert, notwithstanding honourable instances to the contrary within my own experience. The evenings of such girls are free, to be dealt with as they themselves think fit; and these leisure hours are too often spent in the city streets, in the public-house, or in objectionable places of entertainment. Inordinate vanity, a love of drink, ingrained vulgarity, these are the immediate resulting evils—in too many cases, alas! to be followed by worse vices. A comparison of clerks and governesses would lead to a like conclusion—modified, of course, according to the different circumstances of the persons concerned.

Not to take undue advantage of the position, no argument is adduced from such forms of occupation in public life as the stage, the public-house bar, &c. The evils and temptations lying in the path of those who make a living in such directions are too plainly evident to us all.

Home life is more conducive to bodily health. This proposition scarcely needs but to be stated. Of course special evidence in the opposite direction might easily be brought, but in the majority of cases the

assertion here made holds good. Compare once more domestic servants with factory-girls, female clerks with governesses—in each case being careful to select fair instances for comparison, and not striving to obtain examples of overwork. And if extreme cases be taken on either side, look at the death-in-life of factory-girls employed in avocations admittedly injurious to health, and of milliners' girls with their labour of fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen hours a day.

Home life especially fits girls for that which is the natural lot of woman—matrimony. In the home alone is it that a girl (whatever her position in that home may be) can learn those lessons which may fit her to become some day a good wife and mother. Cookery, household management, nursing, the care of children—these are but a few of the things thus to be learnt. And, Sir, seeing that it is to the mothers of our land that we owe so much of our greatness in the past, and must continue to be so largely indebted in the future, surely the superiority of home life in the particular direction now instanced is no slight argument in favour of my proposition.

Home life is rich in softening and refining influences. It makes girls essentially modest and womanly, while a public life hardens them, and takes away many of those attributes which we especially reverence in woman.

Occupation within the home is at least fully as lucrative as occupation outside the home. Comparison must, of course, be made of girls possessing equal advantages of birth and education, and it will then be seen that this statement holds good. Servants earn less wages per month than factory-girls, but they receive board and lodging: lady-doctors endowed with great natural abilities, and who have passed through an expensive course of study, may possibly earn as much as their professional brethren; but with like abilities and advantages other women may earn as much or more in the literary and artistic worlds.

On these five points, Sir, I am content to rest my argument: that home life brings fewer temptations to evil, and is more conducive to moral health; that it is more conducive to bodily health; that it especially fits girls for matrimony; that it is rich in softening and refining influences; and that it is at least fully as money-producing as public life.

END OF OPENER'S ARGUMENT.

OPONENT'S SPEECH.

IN FAVOUR OF PUBLIC LIFE.

In opening his case, Sir, my opponent has been permitted to frame his own definitions and to make his own limitations. I do not propose, therefore, to cavil at them in any way, but I should like to say that, as it seems to me, "Home Occupation *versus* Public Employment" would have more accurately defined the question at issue. One word more, and I will proceed to meet the arguments which have been adduced. I am not at all sure that the classified list of home-workers will bear strict investigation. I doubt, for instance, whether nurses might not just as accurately

be described as workers in public life. This, however, is a minor matter, and, confident in the accuracy of my own view of the whole question, I am willing to allow to the opener of the debate all the advantages which his position has given him.

And now, Sir, to deal with the various arguments *seriatim*.

In the first place, Home Life may perchance bring fewer temptations to evil, but it is, I imagine, undeniable that a Public Life fits girls better to withstand temptation when it comes—as come it must, to all alike, wherever their days may be spent. The boy who has been to a large boarding-school is better armed to cope with the world and its dangers than the gentle lad who has rarely left his own home. The girl who has been well taught in her youth in the knowledge of right and wrong may enter into public life without fear, and the result will be a strengthening of her moral nature which will stand her in good stead in the hour of trial. In the case of too many girls the evil lies, not in the "Public Life," but in their neglected moral and religious education in childhood.

In the second place, I assert emphatically that the question as to whether Home or Public Life be the more conducive to bodily health must depend altogether upon individual circumstances. Many a female clerk who walks to her business every morning enjoys robust health, while many a governess—shut up in the nursery or the school-room all day—grows wan and weary, a martyr to headache and sleeplessness. And "if extreme cases be taken on either side," what about the sempstresses and tailors' drudges who work *at home* for a miserable pittance, scarcely sufficient to keep body and soul together? Think of Thomas Hood's picture of one of them:—

"Work—work—work!
My labour never flags;
And what are its wages? a bed of straw,
A crust of bread—and rags.
That shatter'd roof—and this naked floor—
A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!"

Now, Sir, as to my opponent's third and fourth arguments. Home life may, possibly, teach lessons in household management, may even stimulate sweetness, patience, gentleness, and docility of disposition—all of which are so much to be desired in a wife and mother. Let so much be granted for argument's sake, but does not public life do work fully as important—aye, and more so? Work in the world gives a knowledge of men and things which will fit a girl to conquer any of the problems which may perplex a housewife; work in the world clears away those visions of rose-leaf romance which have obscured the happiness of so many a home; work in the world teaches lessons of self-reliance, endurance, fortitude, and unselfishness, which are of incalculable value in the future. Of what value are fashionable accomplishments, or excessive sensibility, if the wolf be at the door, clamouring hungrily for admittance? Are they not drags on the wheel, impeding it sadly, as it strives once more

to mount the hill to the uplands of freedom and success? In such a case it is a Public Life which fits a woman to be most truly man's help-meet.

Finally, with respect to uneducated labour, at home and in public, there may be but little difference of opinion as to the comparative equality of wages. But when we proceed to consider educated labour, surely the difference is most decidedly against home life. A female clerk in the postal or telegraph service—gifted with the most ordinary abilities—may earn from £40 to £80 per annum; a governess of the same calibre would be fortunate could she obtain from £15 to £20 a year, often without board and lodging. An efficient saleswoman will earn far more than a highly-educated governess, board and lodging being provided in both cases. And so on through almost the whole round of labour. For, to quote my opponent once more, "if extreme cases be taken on either side," how can the sempstress or tailoress who works at home from early morn to midnight for a miserable pittance of 4d. or 6d. a day, be compared to the factory-girl, who at book-binding, or weaving, or any other of our manufacturing industries, will earn from 6s. to 15s. a week, and this, too, with a daily average of only about nine hours' work?

And now, Sir, to come to my crowning argument—

expediency and necessity. The real fact is, there is no room for an army of home-workers. Granted all the avenues instanced by the defender of Home Life, they would not provide with work one-tenth of the girls seeking employment. What would be called respectable home employments are at a discount: the market is overstocked with governesses, fancy-work producers, art-workers. And even in the case of domestic servants there is not the dearth that existed some four or five years ago, in the days of exceptional commercial prosperity. Girls themselves like the comparative freedom of public life, and unless it can be shown most unmistakably that such life is harmful, the laws of supply and demand should not be lightly interfered with by introducing as an obstacle the peculiar sacredness of home life. Fortunate is it for the girls of our land that every day new opportunities are afforded for woman's work in public. The female population of our country yearly exceeds the male in ratio, and continually more and more of them must remain unmarried. If it were not for the occupations open to them in the world, what would become of them? Can the opener of the debate supply any satisfactory answer to this question? I am convinced he cannot!

END OF OPPONENT'S ARGUMENT.

TO OUR READERS.—*The Editor will be happy to receive the opinions of any Readers on the above Question, on either side, with a view to the publication of the most suitable and concise communications in the February Part, when the opener will exercise his right of reply upon the whole. Letters should be addressed "The Editor of 'Cassell's Family Magazine,' La Belle Sauvage Yard, London, E.C.," and in the top left-hand corner of the envelope should be written, "Family Parliament." All communications on the present Question must reach the Editor not later than December 10.*

An honorarium of £1 1s. will be accorded (subject to the discretion of the Editor) to the best letter on either side of the Question; no letter to exceed 50 lines (500 words).

Next month a discussion will be opened on Question II., ARE PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BENEFICIAL?

GARDENING IN DECEMBER.



EACH month, say many of our half-hearted gardeners, since the bedding-out plants were taken up the garden has looked more and more deplorable and desolate. We must be very ready to admit that for out-door occupation or amusement there is many a more festive month than December to be found,

in the garden during this much-abused yet much-anticipated month of December. Why should not the garden look as neat and as orderly in the winter as in the summer? At any rate, then, we can make a good beginning here, and as December is the month in which, especially after gales and rough weather, neglect and idleness make untidiness all the more apparent, we should occupy ourselves with the broom and the rake, and get off all the scattered leaves and broken limbs of trees and shrubs that disfigure the garden so much if allowed to remain eddying round and round in their moaning melancholy circus caused by a diminutive whirlwind. Now these leaves need not be burnt; collect them from every part of the garden into one place, where they will rot down into a rich mould or ferment in some hot-bed or pit.

but it is possible to make the best of things, and certainly more than possible to find plenty to do

Our old friend the ilex, the "holly" tree—its name sometimes conjectured to be a corruption of "holy"—

OPPONENT'S SPEECH.

MR. SPEAKER,

It appears to me that the opener of this discussion makes a mistake in regarding a possible balance at the banker's as the only capital the possession of which entitles thrifty young people to marry. May I suggest that thrift consists in making the most of the resources at our disposal? Now, strange as it may seem to one who looks at life through a medium of pounds, shillings, and pence only, there are such things in the world as energy, ability, common sense, hope, trust, courage, determination, faith, and love!

I am afraid, Sir, that I cannot deny that many of those who contemplate matrimony neither value nor possess wealth of the kind of which I have spoken. These indigent ones look upon marriage as a bargain or convenience. The ladies among them follow it as a profession, the gentlemen regard it as a leap in the dark. A young man who has wasted the best years of his life in self-indulgence, wonders whether it would not be wise for him to sober down and become a steady and respectable member of society. A girl who cares only for dress, show, and appearance, wants to be "settled:" to have an establishment and a well-appointed table. Judging from the tone of his remarks, my opponent appears to know only of characters such as these, and accordingly the question to his mind bears a somewhat one-sided form. The following seems to be the problem as stated by him:—Is a young man of limited income and no ability, who is possessed by the delusion that what is enough for one is enough for five or six, who is determined to live at any rate as luxuriously after marriage as he did when he had only himself to provide for—displaying thrift when he allies himself with a damsel of extremely expensive tastes and unlimited capacity for running up milliners' bills? To such a question only one answer could be given. A union between two such persons would be most ill-advised. Let them wait by all means until the gentleman's income is large enough to meet the demands made upon it. But let these persons take warning—marriage with them will never be a success. There is no possibility of a true marriage, a union of hearts and lives, being made out of such sorry materials. The husband will gradually assume the position of "relieving officer" to his wife and family, the aim of the wife will be to get out of him as much as he can be made to yield. The probabilities are that, when a few years have passed, the once prudent bridegroom will wonder that he could ever have been so foolish as to sacrifice himself for so little, and the once prudent bride will confess to herself that her anticipations have come to nought.

Let us turn from this painful picture. Take the case of a young couple possessing very little money, but rich in love, health, strength, energy, and common sense. Would the lady be wise in determining to spend the best years of her life at home in comparative idleness, leaving her lover to toil alone up the steep ascent to fortune, unaided by her encouragement, love, and sympathy? Would her lover be prudent in refusing

to avail himself of the stimulus to energy and exertion which her sweet companionship would give him? In my opinion, Sir, both parties would make a mistake if they arrived at any such decision. Let them join hands, and while practising careful economy, making a firm stand against debt and extravagance, bravely fight the battle of life together side by side. They will be happier, and may look forward to a useful and honourable future with more confidence than would have been possible had they yielded to the more selfish and so-called prudent feeling. Moreover, they would be more thrifty in arriving at this conclusion. Nothing brings out the best of a man, nothing stimulates him to action so much as does the knowledge that loved ones are dependent upon him.

My opponent declares that young people begin life in debt; try to live in the style their fathers did; do not consider ways and means, and laugh at the necessity for providing for unforeseen expenses: therefore, early marriages are unthrifty. Does he not rather mean that such conduct is unthrifty? If that is his opinion, I entirely agree with him, and, moreover, I maintain that people who could behave in such an improvident manner under any circumstances would get into difficulties no matter what their position. Married people become united in thought, purpose, and feeling not through fellowship in pleasure and ease, but through fellowship in work, endeavour, and, it may be, suffering. Young people are unthrifty in the broadest sense when from motives of false prudence they fling away their chances of making their marriage a blessed union, for they run the risk of wasting life and happiness for the sake of that which is most excellent when regarded as a means to something beyond, but which is worthless as an end in itself—a good income.

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HOME LIFE v. PUBLIC LIFE FOR GIRLS.

(Debate Continued.)

J. TAYLOR, after speaking in favour of home life, concludes: Bachelors will tell you how difficult it is to secure the services of an efficient housekeeper, and I have heard many men say, "I should like to be married, but I can't afford it," well knowing the unnecessary expense of female dress in the present day. No doubt much of it is owing to the fondness of public life as against home life in girls. As the influence of woman in the home ceases, so the misery of this country will increase.

A. L. O. D.—It has been stated in Parliament that there are 700,000 more women than men in our kingdom. In view of this fact, our girls have only the chance, and not the certainty, of possessing that best of earthly prizes—a husband. Yet it is a curious and well-authenticated fact that a girl's chances are increased, and not lessened, by public employment.

reason is obvious: they are brought, naturally, into contact with those of the opposite sex. The mutual interest in the same employment leads on to more personal intercourse. From experience I could tell of many a happy marriage resulting from the choice made by the girl of public instead of private business.

J. A. ARCHER.—Opponent concludes by asking what the vast number of girls are to do for a livelihood. This question he intends to act as a moral extinguisher. But it must have been made of the wrong material, for the case of the Opener still exists and thrives. I would point out that this is not the question at stake. It may be that home life and employment cannot be found for all, but where possible it should be adopted as far preferable to a public life, and this is what we have endeavoured to prove it to be.

W. KING, speaking as to occupation in home or public life being the more lucrative, says: "I am inclined to believe public work has generally the advantage in this respect, though I think home life—generally, of course—compensates for this deficiency in other ways. The statements of Opponent, however, are perhaps capable of some modification. For instance, he says that sempstresses and tailoresses work till midnight at home for fourpence or sixpence per day. Will it cause surprise when I say that there are tailoresses here—I write from a University town—who earn £1 16s. per week, working ordinary hours? I do not say this is general, but you will at once perceive the contrast between this state of things and that cited by Opponent.

MANSEL BLANDFORD.—There is room for both the home worker and the public worker, and need for both. Let not, then, the more enterprising sisters despise the quiet "keepers at home," or these latter look upon those whom domestic occupations fail to satisfy as unwomanly and ungente.

REV. J. HANSON.—It seems to me that my friend the Honourable Member for Home Life has utterly failed to make out his case. We must, of course, take it for granted that many of our English maidens will never enter upon the responsibility of wedded life; does this affect the main question of girl culture? It must be obvious that the training which anticipates possible wifehood and motherhood will greatly ornament a life-long maidenhood. . . . Sir, one word on the question of a woman's salary. Her labour is entitled to the common and honest market price. Free Trade for the woman as well as for the man! It enhances her self-respect, it increases her modest womanly power, when the recompense of her industry is returned in full and righteous "cash." It is her own. She appropriates it with womanly wisdom and with womanly independence, and thus attains a nobility of character which would be all but impossible in a servile position, where a moiety of her honorarium would be conferred in daily rations, in the character and cost of which she could have no privilege of choice.

DR. KEEGAN (as regards the tendency to bodily health): It is surely true neither of these modes of living is in any way conducive to it. The real question here is, which of these modes of life has the lesser deteriorating effect upon the bodily health? Now this is a question very difficult to answer. So much of the effect is due to the previous bodily constitution of the individual, that that treatment which would surely kill, or seriously debilitate, one person, would have very little effect upon another person. And then as regards the third and fourth arguments, it is I think, unquestionable that home life is very superior to work in the world as to its effect in developing those inestimable domestic qualities which every housewife ought to display.

REV. J. M. MATHER.—I think, Sir, the hon. member who introduced the question of "Home Life *v.* Public Life for Girls," and argued so ably in favour of the former, has omitted to deal with a most important question, which, when considered, will make materially against many of the positions he has advanced. The question I refer to is this—Does not public

life need those refining influences which are so largely bestowed upon it through the services of woman in the public sphere? None hold more firmly than I that home needs motherhood; yet I cannot overlook the fact that the world needs womanhood. Just as woman tempers the asperities in the domestic sphere with her gentleness and joy, so in the public sphere man's selfishness and brutality have been lessened by his contact with those employed in female labour.

J. DUNBAR says that, after having carefully read and considered both speeches on the above question, he is forced to admit that Home Life, as defined by the Opener, is best suited for girls. The sphere which a female is called upon to fill is the domestic one, and therefore every means of training her for this home work ought to be encouraged. If all our girls were to rush into public situations, what would our nation come to? Where would be man's refuge from the corroding cares of life and thought, if all our girls were women of business? Woman's office is to teach the heart, and when she aspires to intellectual or commercial superiority, she quits a higher throne than ever she can win.

J. H. G., speaking from experience as an employer of a considerable amount of female labour, declares himself in favour of public life for girls: What can girls of fourteen or sixteen, who have just left school, do? I should hope Opener would not recommend all to be domestic servants, and I am very doubtful whether a literary or artistic employment of girls of that age would prove a very remunerative occupation. Girls in my employ are earning from 5s. to £2 10s. per week, and I very much doubt whether any of them would make half that amount in their own homes.

REV. J. VAILE.—There is only a shade of difference between some whom the Opener calls "home-helpers," and such as the factory-girl, who is spoken of as leading a "public life." The factory-girl may have (if the surroundings of her home conduce to such a result) a better opportunity of enjoying and profiting by home life than some home-helpers who work from morning to night in a home, but not "at home."

Speeches in favour of Home Life received from:—Edwin Taylor, F. W. Stingnell, Annie, J. J. Smith, C. E. Taylor, "There is no place like home," Patience White, M. E. K. Strange, J. Williamson, junr., J. T. K., E. Painter, E. C. Wade, J. Y. Campbell, K. B., Hattie, A. Godfrey, L. A. Friend, A. W. B., G. Dunmore, J. Cole, J. H., "A Young Reader," R. Barber, H. A. Highley, Jessie Houston, Juvenis, F. Leighfield, J. A. Story, C. P. M., Alice A. Truer, A. Beckett, R. B., E. M. Adams, W. B. Woollam, E. Mortimer, M. K. Attwater, A. Dickson, L. Crabtree, Annie Stephenson, James Payne, M. E. Cox, F. H. Farquharson, Isabella Elliott, Anon. (Windsor), Epsilon, L. Kearney, H. S., G. E. Foot, A. A. Murdoch, T. K., A. Isaac Moon, J. M. James, Ramsey Dinnis, F. J. S., H. K. Clements, Amy Redden, M. D. Kirkland, and others.

Speeches in favour of Public Life received from:—Maggie Todd, T. Baker, Alexis, Rick, Emily M. Pinel, E. E. Proctor, J. Eaton Fearn, Emma Fraser, J. C. M., John Trewavas, T. H. Sheridan, M. G., This'sle, Public Worker, Publico, Jean M. Brown, E. S. A. Wright, C. A. Watson, S. C. H., T. Speed, A. H. Curtis, Etheldreda, E. Turner, Frank Tebbs, W. H. Mill, H. W. Hughes, Annie Vivian, M. M. D., "One who Knows," M., "Yorkshire Lassie," J. P. Ellerington, A. Pennington, Verena, Beatrice, H. J. Brumwell, Eliza Alice Smith, S. William Beck, Mary Gardner, A. Steele, "A Little Business Woman," Annie Young, Robert Brown, "Hughenden," E. Heptenstall, "A Mother," Kate Lee, Maria Turner, Marian Rogers, Ishmael Diogenes, M. K., C. T. Doorly, Edith Harper, A. Z., S. Herrman, Marie Tate, M. A. Y., M. A., Matilda Freeston, M. A. S., Margaret Heritage, J. Wilson, and others.

The Honorarium of One Guinea is equally divided between CHARLES F. BENNETT, 38, Regina Road, Tollington Park, London, N., and ELIZABETH EVANS MACGILVERAY, Cannaan Grove, Morning-side, Edinburgh, whose speeches, together with the opener's reply, will be printed next month; but no further speeches on this Question (Home Life *versus* Public Life) can now be received.

THE FAMILY PARLIAMENT.

[THE RULES OF DEBATE will be found in the December or January Part. The Editor's duty will be to act as a kind of "Mr. Speaker;" consequently, while preserving due order in the discussion, he will not be held to endorse any opinions that may be expressed on either side, each debater being responsible for his own views.]

QUESTION I.—HOME LIFE *versus* PUBLIC LIFE FOR GIRLS.

CHARLES F. BENNETT :—Sir,—In rising to support the Home life side of the question, and referring to the arguments, or rather to what Opponent contends are arguments, in favour of Public life, I venture to make the bold assertion that he has not advanced a *single* argument in favour of his side of the question. He asserts his "crowning" argument to be "expediency and necessity," but what have either expediency or necessity to do with the question? I grant that it is both expedient and necessary that many girls should lead a public life, but we are not discussing this, but whether a public or a private life is the better, and with which expediency and necessity have nothing to do. Opponent may say that we *are* discussing the expediency of a public life as compared with a private one, but if so, still less is this any argument, for it is simply asserting the one side of the question.

Again, Sir, it is no argument in favour of a public life that such a life tends to make girls the better able to withstand temptation, but rather this is an argument in favour of home life, for at what cost is it that girls are thus the better fitted to withstand temptation? Is it not at a cost of being exposed to ten, ay, a hundred times the temptation? And I deny that it is good thus to wilfully run after evil. Do we not in our Lord's Prayer say, "Lead us not into temptation"? And yet Opponent reverses this, and says it is better for girls to run into temptation by living a public life than in a great measure, as he admits, to avoid it by a home life. There is great truth in the saying, "One cannot touch pitch without being defiled," and so we cannot continually be exposed to temptation without being accordingly, to a greater or a lesser degree, defiled; therefore I contend that this argument of Opponent's is rather an argument in favour of home life. Just a few words as to the public life of waitresses. We all know the extra and continual temptation to which girls of this class are exposed, and, considering the miserably inadequate salaries which many of them earn, can we wonder that they so often yield to the greatest sin?

When woman was first created she was declared to be man's helpmeet, and surely, as God Himself has thus declared in favour of a home life, it is not for us to question His divine wisdom and say it is better that a girl should lead a public one.

ELIZ. EVANS MACGILVRAY :—Sir,—Permit me to catch your eye and join in this debate. My maiden speech will be *pro bono publico*.

Public life offers the most opportunities, best appliances, and healthiest conditions. It elevates the work and invigorates the worker, and affords the only true, because the only impartial, gauge of worth and ability. Private work is held socially superior, is less risky and irksome, but is restricted and intermittent, and rarely rises to trade mark: it may be estimated as ideally desirable and practically disadvantageous.

Example being better than precept, I furnish the following :—

I am a girl who went into public life some time ago—*res angusta domi* showing me the door. Liking neither governessship nor lady-helping, and doubtful of climbing the "companion ladder" to competence, I thought I might obtain law-copying, or sewing, or—happy thought!—write a book. Willing to do anything rather than leave home, I found I could not do anything without leaving it—that is, Sir, anything *worth any-*

thing, for writing proved most difficult to procure, and not worth procuring; crewel-work, ditto; and my dear book was—um—"returned with thanks!" Also I tried painting and drawing (had just left school), domestic dressmaking (dress-spoiling!), saving a servant by being one myself (and nearly dying of the entailed hardship, confinement, and superhuman self-denial). To make privacy worth the price, I should have had to pay, in money, or waste and loss, through mistakes and delay, for much more training in those few occupations; whereas by studying one of numerous outside employments and pursuing the same at once, I paid less, by being better paid, and earning more than I saved. This, Sir, is principally the pecuniary view of the subject, but I presume we speak of those who, at home or abroad, work because "needs must."

My case is—must be—that of many. Personally I have known none who tried public life voluntarily return to private existence, nor any become the worse because of their extended experience and larger lot. Not, Sir, considered morally worse since I began to go out, I am bodily benefited by enforced exercise; mentally stimulated and strengthened by punctuality, perseverance, and responsibility; and my company has not hurt whatever refinement I originally possessed. I hope I have not lost any of those "womanly attributes" the honourable Opener speaks so highly (and rightly) of; and I know I am not less fit for "the natural lot of woman," but more, having learnt to think for myself and to calculate ways and means with a care and consistency previously unknown because previously un-called for.

I think, Sir, I have demonstrated that public life is more physically healthy than private, quite as moral, fully as fitting for matrimony, not necessarily destructive of softness and refinement, and far more free, hopeful, and lucrative.

OPENER'S REPLY.

MR. SPEAKER,

'Am I assuming too arrogant an attitude, Sir, when I say I am very well satisfied with the result of this, the first discussion in the Family Parliament? and when I add that my belief is stronger than ever in the superiority of Home life over Public life for girls? True it is that my opponent has a slight numerical majority in his favour, but I think that any unprejudiced person who has studied the opinions expressed on either side will be forced to admit that, while the advocates for Home life have been fully convinced that their views of the case are the right ones, and have unhesitatingly expressed their convictions, the defenders of Public life have been to some extent lukewarm, and in numerous instances have admitted, either tacitly or without reserve, that *if it were possible* for all girls to live at home, Home life would after all be best. Something of this was seen when the opponent who first entered the lists against me adopted as his "crowning argument," expediency and necessity, thereby showing the weakness of his case, for as a spokesman whom you, Sir, have especially noticed, has asked—"What have either expediency or necessity to do with the question?"

I am sure, Sir, that we have all heard with much pleasure the personal experiences of one young lady who has sought her vocation in Public life, and who has not only retained all her womanly attributes, but has also acquired new and helpful characteristics.

Thank God, this is the case in thousands of instances (I am proud to admit it), but it is not the general rule, as those acquainted with large cities are forced to know, and such pleasant examples are usually the happy result of home influences and education abiding true and strong long after the home has been left.

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to be this: that whether or no Home life be the more conducive to bodily health, whether or no it be as lucrative as Public life (these are matters open to lengthy argument, and after all they must be

settled by individual cases), Home life indisputably brings fewer temptations to evil, and is more conducive to moral health; it is, speaking generally, richer in softening and refining influences; and it certainly fits girls for matrimony. Necessity may urge many girls into Public life, but wherever possible Home life is to be preferred.

The following is a summary of the speeches:—In favour of Home Life, 64; in favour of Public Life, 69; neutral, 8. Total, 141.

END OF DEBATE ON QUESTION I.

QUESTION II.—ARE PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS BENEFICIAL TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

(Debate continued.)

J. E. SHATTOCK:—Mr. Speaker,—To my mind one great argument in favour of "public examinations being beneficial to young people," has been omitted by the opener of the debate, and that is *their great utility as a supplement*—both in the case of boys and girls—to a home education; and by home education, I mean an education conducted either by the parents themselves, or by teachers selected for the purpose. There are numberless cases where girls, in particular, either from motives of economy, or from a desire to give them a thorough home training, extending over a wider range than mere book-learning, are able to have no reliable public test applied to their progress, except through the medium of public examinations.

J. EATON FEARN:—In nine cases out of ten examinations are the means of thwarting study. A young fellow of nervous temperament commences to study for some examination, and so afraid is he that he shall not pass, that he shatters his health by over-exertion, and so sickens himself of study, that the moment his examination is over he flings his books away for ever, considering himself *proficient*.

DR. KEGAN:—As to the effect upon health, I am disposed to think that the candidate who cannot bear the temporary stimulation of the brain, or a little occasional overwork and excitement, is not by nature fitted to fill any chief or responsible position in the world, or to properly discharge any duties that require calmness, courage, or forethought. And, moreover, if only fit and proper subjects and methods of examination be chosen and followed, the effect of the latter upon both parents and teachers will be beneficial rather than otherwise. And, finally, touching the matter of selection, and tests of knowledge, it may be observed that a candidate, in order to be successful at an important and searching examination, absolutely requires a certain amount, not merely of mental power, but of physical energy as well. It is possible indeed for a very diligent student to overtax his bodily strength, and so-wise materially debilitate it; but every collegian knows full well the fact that the stouter in body are almost always the stronger in mind. There is no reason why the body should not be cultivated in conjunction with the mind, and thereby the latter will be enabled to labour with more clearness and thoroughness. A "sound mind in a sound body" ought to be the paramount aim and end of every system of education; and I fail to see in a series of examinations anything that militates against this policy.

MARY ATKINSON:—As one who up to fifteen was the vainest and idlest of girls, and who afterwards learnt, through the Oxford and London University Examinations, that she was not the cleverest of females; and who, first through a spirit of emulation, and distaste for "plucking," and later through a love of knowledge for its sake, acquired a tolerable education, I take this opportunity of offering my tribute of gratitude to public examinations.

EPSILON:—Sir,—The impression conveyed to my mind by the speech of the opener in this debate is, that public examinations are the *cause* of the "higher standard of education common amongst all classes," that to them is "the increase in the educational wealth of the country" due. To this assumption I beg, Sir, to

demonstrate, and submit that they are merely the *index* of that growth of learning which is indebted to other influences. The rapidity with which knowledge spread, from the invention and use of the art of printing down to the period when public examinations became general, is a sufficient proof that knowledge will "grow from more to more" without such adventitious aid.

E. ISABEL COX:—It is too generally the case, to my mind, that children do their work with the idea that the sooner finished the sooner to play, thus showing that the craving for knowledge is not inherent in their nature, and to them learning is only a necessary evil. Up to a certain age in either sex, this is irremediable. An aim for work is almost necessary for young people, as we all know idleness is the bane of youth, and to meet this malady we have our grand public examinations, which to a certain degree help to take it out of the system. Public examinations serve as an incentive to work which did not exist in past days. Education was then fixed on a different basis. Study in its highest sense was confined to the clever or gifted few, for whom other pursuits had no charm; consequently, the less gifted let it drift carelessly by, there being no special emulation. Now, in these days of progress, scarcely a school exists (conducted upon modern principles) which does not send in and prepare its pupils for public examinations. No one can fail to notice the healthy active condition of the present system of education contrasted with the comparative deadness of the past.

T. P. GORDON:—While I am not prepared to go as far as the opener, I think his opponent will make few converts. Making due allowance for mere assertion, one might safely follow the negative argument to its conclusion without getting beyond the conviction that the present mode of examination has faults. This fact by no means proves the evil effects of examinations, but, in my humble opinion, proves the necessity for reform. That there are weak points in the present system, which, like every other good thing, is closely allied to evil, no reasonable person can doubt. But will the abolition of the good provide a remedy for evil?

W. T. HARRIS:—The examinations, Sir, most strongly to be condemned are, perhaps, those of our Elementary Schools. The injurious effect of these examinations was ably pointed out by the recent deputation to the Education Department. Schoolmasters admit that many children are positively hurt by the preparation; they are obliged to make dull scholars keep pace with the sharp, or their percentage of "passes" suffers—and anybody acquainted with school work knows what that means to the master.

G. S. SELBY:—This question, Sir, cannot and must not be decided upon side issues. A broad, general view of the whole facts of the case must be taken, if a correct judgment is to be formed. Let the question as to whether examinations are baneful or beneficial be decided by the results which they have produced. Is England to-day, educationally, better or worse than she was twenty-five years ago? If better (and I imagine there can be but one opinion about that), then to what extent are examinations responsible for the result? Both the opener and his opponent are agreed that examinations have revo-