East of the town is the suburb of Southsea, itself a noted watering place, which however derives its importance from the larger town. Here is Southsea Castle, a massive fortress, said to be erected on the site of an old Roman camp. However this may be, certain it is that in digging the foundations for an addition to the castle, a number of pieces of pottery and Roman tile were unearthed. A little farther east is Fort Cumberland, opposite to which is Monckton Fort. These two, with one or two smaller batteries, effectually protect the approach to the harbor. This harbor is deserving of notice;—an entrance only some 200 yards wide gives access to a spacious sheet of water about four miles long, by six broad,—about as large as the upper bay in New York harbor. Here the entire British navy may ride in safety.

In Portsea Barracks is shown a chamber called the Frenchman's cell. During the war with France at the close of the last century, a French frigate was captured and towed into Portsmouth. On board was a young Frenchman named Lieutenant Gantier. His capture was deemed a very important one, as he had, some few months previously, penetrated in disguise inside the lines at Portsmouth, and made himself pretty familiar with the defenses of the place, and he made no scruple of carrying the information thus gained to his own government. The penalty, if caught, was death. During the action he was severely wounded, and fever setting in, it was thought more than likely he would cheat his captors after all. One stormy night the commandant of the barracks was roused by a timid knock at his door. On answering the summons he was confronted by the figure of a veiled lady, who, if appearances went for anything, he surmised to be both young and handsome.

She inquired in half French, half English, "if she could speak with Monsieur le Commandant?"

Col. Barker signified that he was the person she wanted, and begged her to enter and be seated. Looking timidly around, she complied, and raising her veil, disclosed a face of surpassing loveliness.

"Oh, monsieur," she exclaimed, "mon pauvre Hector—my poor Hector—you will let me see him!"

Conjecturing at once that she referred to Lieutenant Gantier, Col. Barker could not help saying under his breath, "Lucky dog," and then, thinking of his condition, "what a fool to get himself in such a mess!" Then he replied to her appeal by saying that it was impossible to grant her request; the prisoner was in solitary confinement.

"Oh, monsieur," she supplicated, "you will not refuse--you cannot;" here she paused, and then resumed, blushes covering her face. "I am his betrothed, monsieur, and I have traveled all the way from Paris to see him. Oh, mon pauvre Hector!"

Here was a pretty case, thought sturdy Colonel Barker; what should he do? Her beauty and devotion could not fail to move him, and he determined to take the responsibility of granting the lady's request, the more readily as he believed that the lieutenant would not live many days.

Motioning her to follow him, he led the way to the cell in which, on a straw pallet, the young man was tossing in the delirium of fever. The girl threw herself on her knees at his side, and pressed her hands on his burning forehead. The effect was magical—the restless head became still, and the wild eyes took a more rational expression. A few words addressed to her lover in French seemed to almost restore his scattered senses.

"It is I, mon ami, calm yourself; it is I, Hortense!"

An hour later, when the doctor made his rounds, the wounded man was sleeping soundly, and Hortense was still by his bedside.

Her beauty and winning ways completely conquered the stern old colonel, and she was allowed to remain, and nurse her betrothed to convalescence. Meantime, peace was proclaimed, and Lieutenant Gantier and Hortense Lamonte were married by the chaplain of the French frigate in which the Lieutenant had been captured, and the story runs that Colonel Barker gave the bride away.

Opposite Portsea Island, on which Portsmouth is built, and separated from it by an arm of the sea called the Solent, is the Isle of Wight, the garden of England, which will form the subject of the next article.

Talk With Girls.

WOMEN IN LITERATURE.

BY JENNIE JUNE.

A FEW weeks ago an article appeared in the columns of a newspaper, which was amusing from its absurdity, and saddening from its ignorance, because, in the latter respect, it was not at all singular, but so much like vast quantities of the stuff that gets into print, that one could hope nothing from any catastrophe that might happen to this one writer; his place being so ready to be filled by scores of others. The sins in this particular case consisted of the blunder of confounding the most ordinary work of the newspaper writer and correspondent with literature proper, and secondly, of arguing that, because the work of women writers on the daily press runs largely to dress, and fashions, and gossip, that the influence of women in literature has been, is, and will be, of a lowering character.

"What is literature then?" asks some young girl who has been fondly cherishing the hope of literary pre-eminence because she has written something from Boston, or New York, that was actually printed in her local paper.

Literature is, strictly, the thought of a people expressed in written words. There are different kinds of literature, but each one is the sense of something; it is the digested thought upon that particular theme or subject which finally ripens and finds expression. There are various degrees of mechanical excellence behind this thought which give dignity, grace, and more or less of charm and completeness to the work, but this mechanicism is not the soul of literature, or even its body, it is simply a knowledge of technique, which has some value, but must not be mistaken for the thing itself.

The true literature, that is the thought of any subject in which we are interested, is to the mind what certain kinds of food are to the body, but you would not think of calling the maid or the man-servant who gathers up the *débris*, and serves it up in a *réchauffé*, a discoverer or producer of foods; he or she may be good in their way, and respected for doing their work in a cleanly, healthful, agreeable manner, but they do not lay claim to originality, or to any faculty but that of a very ordinary kind. There are hundreds of this class in literature and journalism—industrious collectors of ideas, scraps of information, facts, items, incidents, which are gathered as one may see old men and women gathering scraps from ash-barrels; a cinder here, a rag there, a crust somewhere else—but each one having a specific money value in their eyes, though to one not in the business, the mass of refuse would seem to be utterly worthless. Nor is that avocation altogether mean or unworthy which rescues from what has been cast aside as rubbish something that can be turned to varied and profitable account, but it is not a service that entitles those performing it to a place among the great lights of the world—on the contrary, modesty best becomes them, not arrogance, for they live in a reflected light, and, like ghouls and cannibals, upon the flesh and blood of other men and women.

It has become the fashion of late years to call that literature which deals with literary work and workers, to the exclusion of that which much more truly represents it, because everything that has a vital human interest is entitled to its literature, and there is no reason at all why literature should be supposed to deal only or mainly with the imagination.

This theory of literature, however, crowds us with crude thinking and crude writing, in regard to a vast number of authors and their works, of which the readers are quite as competent to form an opinion as the writers; but these self-constituted oracles do not think so, and they keep on writing and criticising until their piled-up weakness buries out of sight the original strength.

It is much easier to express opinions in regard to work that has been done than to do the work itself. It is safer to talk about those who are dead than those who are alive, either in the way of praise or blame, so that literary gleaners and scavengers always select the worthies of a past century, rather than those of the present; and what an eternal warming over it is of cold Lamb, of poor Robert Burns, of Landor, of Southey, of Shelley, of Byron, and the rest of them.

Tennyson will get it by and by, and our own Longfellow, Bryant, and many more. One would think it would add another pang to death to think of the repeated and minute

dissection and overhauling which character, qualifications, mental structure, and motive must undergo when they are no longer here to explain or modify opinion. Doubtless the test of their work is in the fact that it lives and exerts an influence upon the minds of succeeding generations, but it is the work that lives, not the ephemeral and frequently impertinent, because ignorant, opinions put in print in regard to it.

A powerful English writer has said in a recent article, "Who now reads the whole of the ancient writers, to the study of whose works Milton devoted five years of his life before he commenced writing *Paradise Lost?* Who systematically reads the great writers, be they ancient or modern, whom the consent of ages has marked out as classics: typical, immortal, peculiar teachers of our race? Alas! the *Paradise Lost* is lost again to us beneath an inundation of graceful verse and well-turned phrases, sugary stanzas of lady-like prettiness, and ceaseless explanations in more or less readable prose of what John Milton meant, and what he did not mean, of what he saw, and what he did not see, why Adam and Satan were like that, and were not like the other. We read a whole library *about Paradise Lost,* but the *Paradise Lost* itself we do not read; we bury it, and pile up this mass of rubbish above it." Again he says, "For once that we take down our Milton, and read a book of that 'voice' whose 'sound is like the sea,' we take up fifty times a magazine with something about Milton, or Milton's grandmother, or a book stuffed with curious facts about his house, and furniture, and personal appearance, and ailments of his first wife." Gossip is as despicable in books as out of them—more so, for in this form it obtains a certain dignity, a *raison d'être* for admitting the necessity for its existence as an element of our modern society.

The faculty for talking about genius is not genius itself; it does not even argue thorough understanding or appreciation of genius. Everybody talks, and people must talk about something. What it is they talk about depends upon their habits of thought, their surroundings, the kind of persons among whom they have lived, their environment, in short, from their birth, and somewhat also upon the lives and habits of their ancestors; for though we are projected upon the present, we are made up largely of the past.

It will be seen, therefore, that when a necessity arises to earn a livelihood, or a desire for some occupation, or an ambition for distinction seizes the mind, how natural and easy it is for a ready talker or writer to imagine they have something to say that all the world ought to know—or, at least, something that some one may be induced to pay for. The number of books does not prove the greatness of either sex in literature. The question is: who are the masters?—who have written the books which sound the highest and lowest depths in the human heart, in human life, and, greater still, who have marshaled all intellectual forces, and swept the diapason of the universe? Are they not Shakespeare, Milton, and Scott? Had the works of these three authors been written by women, and not another book, a woman's claim to the highest place in literature would have been unanswerable.

Still, since there has been any literature, women have been in it more or less; and, if they have not done the greatest work, they have done excellent secondary work. It is, I think, at least doubtful if women are capable of the concentration of power in one direction which is occasionally summed up in one man. They are naturally more quick, more versatile, more *sided,* than men—their lives are more spent in detail, they are more conscientious in the performance of small duties, and they cannot so easily separate themselves from social and other obligations as men.

It is of no use to say that women would be equally capable of great work if they were not bound by these minor claims. The simple fact is, that no woman has yet done for the world in the field of letters what some men have done:—Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, Scott, Goethe, and others—Moliere and Beethoven, for example. Still it is true that this fact is not decisive: for the field of operations for women has been so restricted that a broad, accumulative experience was not possible. I mean that which comes from the ages, through the garnered thoughts and activities of men who have struck every note, and been able to estimate the present and judge of the future through the past which they have studied, and with the conditions and work of which they have made themselves acquainted.

The experiences through which women are now passing, the character which can only be acquired through individual struggle and effort, is doing much to broaden and deepen the sources of their achievements. Heretofore the work of women has been personal and social, necessarily confined to the things with which they were acquainted, and at most, and best, a sum of heart histories, of individual yearnings and neighborhood statement, or analysis. The two greatest representatives we have had in the field of pure literature in the English tongue, are Mrs. Lewes (George Eliot), and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Why they are great it is not our present business to discover, but I have written thus far to very little purpose, if even the very young reader has not discovered that to touch the field of pure art in literature, not to speak of highest art, the author must get out of himself, or herself, and into the "open." He must be in sympathy with all natural and intellectual forces, and able to sound the gamut of human, as well as individual feeling and experience. The overflow of trashy books and worthless periodical literature, so called, is evidence of increased activity, but not of greater power. It is dissipating, rather than enlarging and strengthening. It stands in the way of the real study of good books, and is as intellectually demoralizing as reckless indulgence of the appetites is debasing to the body. The severity which denied to the girl all access to books in the past has reacted, and the rebound is almost as fatal to their strong and symmetrical development as the denial. The ignorance which formerly considered reading a waste of time, now believes all time well spent that is expended upon printed words.

But the human brain is limited in its powers, like the human stomach, and reading, like eating, is only of real use to us so far as it supplies nutritive elements for the mind to work upon and assimilate. A certain amount of good reading is almost infinitely better than unlimited skimming through superficial rubbish which enervates the mental faculties, vitiates the taste, and frequently lowers the moral tone.

One of the great uses of our "higher" education for women will be to reduce the number of women aspirants for literary honors, and the certainty of better work for those who remain; for the rest, we must look to the next hundred years to tell the story of women in literature.

The Ancient Language of Finnland.

BY K. M. H.

UNTIL the close of the last century, all that was known of the ancient tongue of Finnland was that the common people spoke an incomprehensible jargon, into which Bibles, hymn-books, and catechisms had to be translated for their comprehension.

The language of the Finns proper, those who have given their name to the country they inhabit, indicates an early knowledge on their part of agriculture and the various forms of handicrafts; but all words in the language which point to a more advanced stage of civilization can be traced to a Swedish origin, and consequently must have been introduced after the conquest of Finnland by Sweden, or after the latter part of the twelfth century.

From Sweden, Finnland received her schools and other educational institutions, as well as her government, and became externally a Swedish province. But in a land so extensive and thinly populated, it was not possible that the Swedish language and civilization should penetrate all localities so as to supersede the ancient tongue and the entirely distinct nationality of the people.

These were not destroyed, but they came to be represented by the rustic people of the interior, who in their isolation from the influences of the progressive civilization of successive ages, have kept alive their ancient language, and in great measure all things belonging to their ancient nationality, its modes of thought, its customs and manners, its traditions and superstitions, and its popular poetry, the songs of their Kuna singers.

Thus did Finnland become as it were the abode of a two-fold nationality. The one clinging to the memories of the past and stagnating in its forms; the other acquiring new life by contact with modern European civilization and literary culture, though retaining much of its original character. This class