

The Woman of the Nineteenth Century.

(See two-page Frontispiece.)

IN contemplating the woman of the nineteenth century we are apt to imagine that great concessions have been made to her; that she enjoys privileges her sex never enjoyed before; that colleges have suddenly opened their doors to her, and the editorial sanctum admitted her; and, in fact, that "the world's before her where to choose" in the way of employment, education, and amusement, and all this for the first time in her history.

Is this really so? Look back as far as the old Jewish times. The women did not disdain spinning and weaving and cooking and tending the flocks; the men themselves, even princes, worked in the fields and attended to the cattle. At the same time, there were women, like Deborah that mother in Israel, who was a lawgiver; and there were prophetesses, like Miriam. There were women who "looked well to their households and eat not the bread of idleness;" and there were women who appeared to be "business women," like the one alluded to in Proverbs: "She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She maketh fine linen and selleth it. She delivereth girdles to the merchant." Those wise old Jews did not think it strange that this woman should be in business for herself, nor did they honor her any the less because she chose to be self-supporting, and in the matter of maintenance called no man master. Later we find a woman, Priscilla, teaching a purer doctrine to Apollos, and it was not thought strange that she should be thus engaged.

As far back as the time of Zenobia women knew all that the colleges can teach them now. Zenobia herself understood the Latin, Greek, Egyptian, and Syriac languages. She was as brave as she was learned, and ruled with wisdom when on the throne.

In Greece, too, while the women spun and embroidered, and did not disdain household avocations, we hear of the daughter of a King winning a prize at a chariot race, and Corinna five times bearing away the prize from Pindar.

The Italian universities as early as 1209 conferred degrees upon women. Betisia Gozzadini was made Doctor of Laws. Maddalena Buonsignori was professor of laws at Bologna. In 1733, Laura Bassi was professor of philosophy at Bologna, and Maria Agnesi was professor of mathematics in 1750, while Clothilde Tambroni was professor of Greek in 1794. Anna Mazzolini understood anatomy well enough to take her husband's place when he was too ill to lecture, and made quite a name by her ability.

In art women distinguished themselves long ago. Samberini was the assistant of Raphael, and Properzia Rossi was famed as a sculptress. Other women attained distinction in art.

Editorial work is not a new departure for women. In 1702, Elizabeth Mallet edited and published a paper in London. Margaret Craper, Anna Franklin, and Clementine Reid, 1772, Elizabeth Timothy, 1773, and Sarah Goddard, 1776, all edited and published papers. There were women engravers, too, who executed admirable work, of some of whom history makes mention; and there were women who set type.

Even during the days of chivalry, when women were supposed to be merely the inspirers of men's warlike deeds and the objects of their fond idolatry, the ladies learned the healing art, and their hands it was that applied the remedy to the wound. They studied surgery, too, that they might be more useful. Some of the ladies of Queen Elizabeth's court did the same.

In looking back to the past we find women preaching, occupying chairs of philosophy and law and medicine, teachers of men, as were Hypatia and the young lady who expounded the laws of Justinian at Bologna. They were learned in the languages, as was Mary, Queen of Scots, who understood six, and Elizabeth, who was proficient in Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish. Woman had the vantage-ground then—how was it that she did not keep it?

The Greeks personified wisdom by a woman, and it was women that pronounced the oracles. The Romans had their sybils, the Hebrews their prophetesses, the Druids their priestesses, and the Germans their priestesses and women warriors. Plato thought that man had no natural superiority over woman excepting in physical strength; and Voltaire thought them equal in all things but inventive power. Cornelius Agrippa wrote a book in 1509 entitled the "Nobility of the Female Sex and the Superiority of Woman over Man."

Yet we find the women at one period finding their chief pleasure in spinning and knitting and making lace and doing the family sewing. They went to market, and gave a supervision to the cook, if they did not actually take her place; they minded the baby and they taught the children. Their amusements were battledore and shuttlecock and "the graces," played with two hoops and four sticks. Their music was some little love ditty sung plaintively to the guitar, at the request of the friend who called; and when they visited, it was in company with the husband or brother. This was pre-eminently the domestic age—the age that made the oak and the ivy simile possible. The age when man was willing to be leaned upon, and woman was willing to lean. The plate very graphically shows this era.

Then came a revolution. The oak rather repudiated the idea of the ivy twining, as of old, around its sturdy limbs. Then it was that, with her needs, woman awoke to the consciousness of her own powers that had been sleeping so long. She remembered what Plato had said about her, and what Voltaire declared. She thought of those Italian women of old, the women lawyers of Bologna, and the women doctors. The old ways of woman's work came back again, and, strange to say, the world knew no better and called them new. Necessity opened again the barred doors, and the result is shown by the artist in our second picture. More physical strength was required for her work, so a different style of amusement came into vogue—something health-giving and vigor-inspiring.

The woman of the nineteenth century is not walking in a new path; other women have walked there before her. She may never utter oracles or prophesy, but she will rise to a high altitude. The sewing machine has shivered her needle, so she grasps the pen and the graver's tools, and across the wide chasm of time she shakes hands with the women who set her the example that, followed, leads her to independence and happiness.

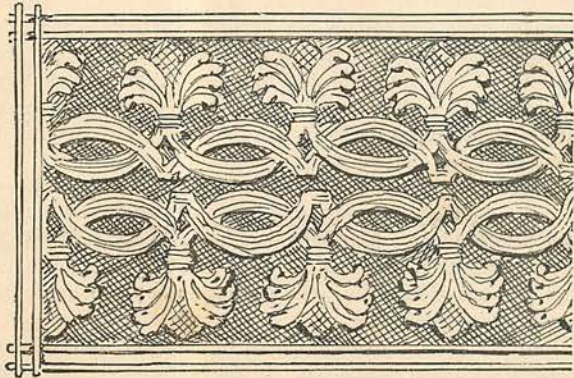
Suggestions.

THE CHINA ROOM.

THIS being between the two rooms is not so light, and half a dozen water colors brighten the walls. First of all, the back of the book-case, which forms the partition between the two rooms, serves to display china plates resting against a light-red and gold paper, which is pasted there to finish the cases. At the back of the piano a chintz curtain hangs, and above it is a row of plates. The side-board, which is bright with glass and china, is an old-fashioned bureau cleaned and polished and finished with new

brass mountings and rings; the rings and escutcheons may be had at any hardware store, and the mountings are made of some "brass" frames for photographs. By cutting the brass frame in four I got four mountings for the corners of the sideboard; a wooden upright back was fastened by iron braces above the bureau, to this was fixed a shelf, and it and the back covered with erimson plush; a small piece of velvet-framed mirror is fixed to the back and reflects the pretty cups that hang by brass picture-hooks to a small brass rod that is fixed at the bottom of the shelf. The latter is grooved at the top, and on it rest four pretty landscape plates, but decoratively, no doubt; I mean that a landscape is not the proper decoration for a plate from which one is to eat, but they are so well done as to make a beautiful border for the top of the sideboard. Above the *portière* is a row of bright blue old English "Delft," and four pink-flowered "Avon" dishes are fixed down one side of the book-case. A corner cupboard holds a complete "tea set," and no one to look in its glass doors at the bright color would think it cost only \$7.00, especially as a piece of real old Bohemian glass and some delicate Spaignart and other glass fancies adorn the top and unenclosed shelves of this triangular china closet. It is a pretty room to eat in, and now that the carpets are up and the floors are cool one gets a pretty view of both rooms—the etchings in the front room, the paintings in the studio, and the strawberries and yellow butter on the table repeat the "Derby" vase on both sides the room, for though there is, it is true, only a row of cups and saucers on hanging cabinet shelves under one of the pictures, still a circular mirror repeats the Derby vase by being hung on the opposite wall.

A friend, who dislikes much red as ornament on the dinner or supper table, recommends a cream-colored linen cloth, edged with lace, a strip of blue plush down the center, a great many oxydized and shaded silver vessels placed upon it, also a glittering array of glass. But, granted its beauty, and no doubt it would be with plenty of white and pink and yellow flowers, placed in the fine old English brass beaut-pots, how many could afford it? However, as the designer is an authority in his own world, I quote it for the readers who have a plethora of treasures in gold and silver and linen and brass.



COPY OF "TOOLING" ON A KASTILIONE BIBLE OF EDWARD THE SIXTH.

I met some days ago in the library of an acquaintance an old block-letter Bible, once owned by the College of Jesuits in Munich in 1608, and bearing the date of 1551. The binding was of a pale chocolate color, and resembled a modern plastic work in tissue paper and plaster-of-Paris, the material used by printers in stereotyping their newspapers. But the "tooling," showing a design all in intaglio, save eight heads which were in relief, was very beautiful, and I give you here a copy of the border, which I have successfully imitated in point lace

braid upon white net. I traced the design on paper, then basted the net upon it, finally the braid, and embroidered the honeysuckle-like finish, afterward cutting the net away. The lace well pays for the trouble, and is worth an effort on the part of the needleworker whose eyes are strong.

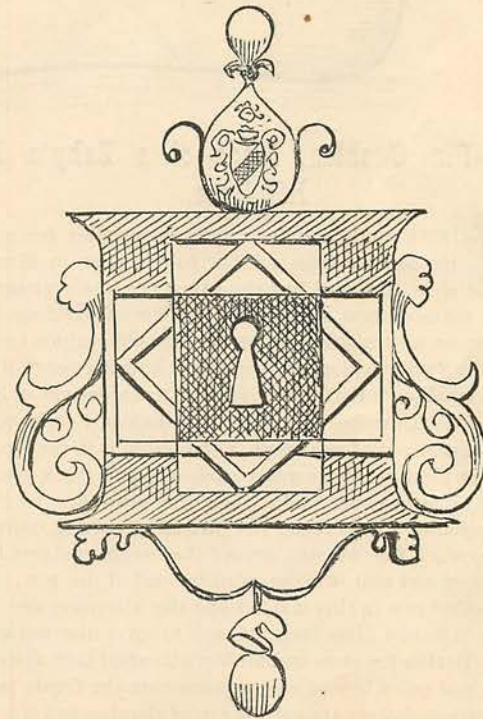
This initial is one designed for five-o'clock-tea napkins, to which we shall have occasion to refer again in our next article, the Print Room, in December.

At the back of a chair, covered with gray linen, a friend of mine has worked in old English text the motto of Anne of Cleves—

"God Send Me Wel to Keepe."

Another old chair has the Pierrepont motto—"Pie repone te" worked upon it.

There is a curious *mélange* of "Eastlake" and "rococo" in a picture of a room "panneled and decorated" in the time of Louis XIV., but a hint for a broad window furnishing may be got from it. Two low seats, which are no more elegant than simply covered wood boxes, are fitted in, leaving a space that holds a little shelf above for work or a book, so that two people could sit and read or work facing each other.



I saw this copied in gold and blue and light brown on a light-wood cabinet—the small oval at the top was an heraldic device. It made a pretty finish to the china cabinet. It is similarly used on a light-wood box to hold photographs. It is also done in blue and gold—omitting the key-hole—on a light-wood book-holder for a table.

I saw some chairs covered with canvas a short time ago, and the surface roughly painted in tapestry design; they were certainly effective and rich, but I cannot tell how well they will wear, or if they are as serviceable as they looked handsome.

KATHERINE ARMSTRONG.