

Milton surely erred when he wrote, "He for God only, she for God in him." Woman has no such secondary place with God, and no man is her mediator save the one Man Christ Jesus. She is for God in a sense as direct and absolute as any man, and we believe that, for many reasons to her, the sacrifice of praise is easier to render.

How poor and paltry all lower theories of her calling appear. The lowest is the physical theory, which was Napoleon's, and which regarded the populating of the world as the chief object of her existence. Next we get the domestic theory, which regards her as the former of the home. Then the social theory, where her chief rôle is to be the companion of man, and so we go on, each and every theory having the one fatal objection, that God is not in it; and yet it is to Him His creature woman owes her first and best. The Divine theory, that woman (as well as man) is made just, for the glory of God comprehends all others in their right but subordinate order. The minor aims vary according to a woman's talents, which are to be exercised for the good of herself and her fellows. Those who feel most the force of and agree most with the foregoing words will be the last to be ostentatiously celestial. In proportion as they are given to God will they do rather than say, and least of all will they fall into the error by which Pharisees are manufactured—to the inevitable production also of Sadducees among the bystanders—that of imagining themselves to be the darlings of heaven, specially informed and specially in-

structed in the truth. The true service of God never exalts or puffs up as does often the service of man, it only humbles. We do not think profound girl theologians are objects of admiration to either God or man, for so much in the head turns to gas, and not always even oxygen gas. Besides, it is such a temptation to seek to outstrip one's neighbours in the pronunciation of the word "Shibboleth," rather than in seeing who can best occupy the bottom of the ladder, which indeed is not far from the foot of the cross.

Perhaps, however, this is not the greatest danger girls have to fear. Is it not rather the intense apathy of the majority as to any purpose or aim at all—worthy of the name? The waste of women's lives from this one cause alone is a loss incalculable to the world and to God. It is not too much to say that the future of the world depends upon the conduct of women.

Of course it seems only a little thing, and by no means a bad thing, like stealing or lying, to lead an aimless life, and yet is it not robbing God, and is not life the seed-time of good words and deeds or the reverse? The harvest that is reaped is always greater than the seed that is sown, sometimes thirtyfold sometimes sixtyfold and sometimes an hundred, and so is the result of the lives that we lead in their effect and power over others for ill or good.

We have each of us two looking-glasses in our room, the one for our face, which we study oft enough, and the other is the Bible for our soul. We are persuaded that if each girl stood for even five minutes each morning before

this glass and asked herself for whom am I going to live this day, that many an empty life would be filled, many a long face would be shortened, many a discontented pout would disappear, many a sneer would vanish in the busy happiness that results from the discovering that, after all, life is worth living.

Ruskin says that in youth a young girl's life is like a solution of sugar-candy that slowly crystallises round one central string or object if it be given time and quiet. Let this central object be our Father in Heaven, and let us secure the time and quiet needed for crystallisation without a flaw, so that the central string is clearly perceptible through every part of our sweet-tasting life.

How unspeakably precious and never to be replaced is the morning of life. Not sad but joyous, and yet unspeakably solemn. Nineteenths of those that read these pages are still in it, but somehow we seldom realise its value till it is passed, just as we seldom prize health till it is lost. It may be then that this short article will be in time in leading us to take more serious and earnest views of life than heretofore, and in doing our best at any rate to restore to God's great organ its chief beauty, the lost *vox humana* stop!

"Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever.  
Do noble things, not dream them all day long;  
And so make life, death, and the great For Ever  
One grand sweet song."

## A FEW REMARKS ON PLAIN SEWING.



is a popular fallacy, but one which is nevertheless greatly believed, that "plain sewing," as it is called, is easy; it is plain,

therefore how can there be any difficulty about it? This is a great mistake; there is as much care needed over the hem or seam as over the most beautiful embroidery.

First of all the hem must be straight, care taken that it is the same width in all parts; that this may be so—unless the worker has an exceptionally straight eye—measurement will have to be taken; this prolongs the work, and is often tedious, but it is most necessary to produce a satisfactory result. Where material can be torn or thread drawn this should be done, as it greatly facilitates the first "turning-down" of the hem. When washing material is torn the edge often has the appearance of not being straight, indeed it is not straight, but this defect will be remedied as soon as the article has been washed.

It is a very good plan in the case of torn material that is not quite straight, to take hold of the two edges a little from the corner that has the sharpest angle, and pull the torn edge in the direction of the opposite corner; this will be found to greatly straighten the offending edge and make the work easier.

The word "seam" is a very wide term used for the joining together of two pieces of material. There is the "run and fell," a form to which I must own I am particularly partial.

Again, care must be taken, and the rule of "evenness" be strictly followed; it is most distressing to see such a seam wave in and out

as if a worm had left his trail as a guide for the worker. Pin or tack carefully the material before starting, then with equal care see that the running is exactly the same distance from the edge of material for the whole length of seam; if both these instructions are thoughtfully attended to, the felling and consequently the seam must be good, unless great carelessness is allowed to come in at the finish.

Then we have the seam or seaming together of two pieces—a mode often used in the case of selvages. To some this form of sewing is quite easy, to others it is wearisome and difficult. An error is often fallen into here; it is that of sewing too neatly; this is a fault not often complained of, still it does occur in the present instance not unfrequently. The stitches are put too closely together, and are in some cases too small; they look very beautiful until the seam is opened, and then—well, I am sorry for the poor fingers that have to smooth open the work: you might as well try to make the rope on a sail even with the canvas to which it is sewn. No, do the stitches evenly, and not tumbling one on the top of the other, and the seam should be almost invisible when pressed out.

We have also what I call the very useful seam; it is pleasing to many as it is more quickly accomplished than the "run and fell"; I mean that in which the two pieces of material are placed together, not with the edges even as in the "seam," but with one edge about a quarter of an inch beyond the other, sufficient to be turned down and felled over, so that no raw edges show; this has the appearance on the right side of a seam simply stitched or run together, only is much neater. It is very nice for children's nainsook or muslin clothes.

Now I think a few words may be said on "gathering." When well done and nicely stroked, "gathers" are quite a pretty addition to any work. To begin with, "gathers" must

be even; a big stitch here and a little stitch there will never be satisfactory, and cannot fail to have the appearance of slovenly work. Moreover, done in such a way they cannot possibly be stroked properly, and it is the even and careful stroking of a "gather" that makes its beauty; for what can look nicer than even "gathers" stroked and sewn into their places at regular intervals. We can all call to mind the lovely little "baby" garments with their many "gathers" so beautifully done. I think they are a pleasure to every eye.

Talking of babies' or children's clothes reminds me of the prettiest of summer frocks for every-day wear. It is made of pure white linen, but not too fine. Smock back and front in a straight piece down the centre, leaving each side plain for about two inches, on which is worked a little embroidery; coils down in buttonhole-stitch are very effective, with feather-stitching between them. On the shoulders a straight piece about an inch and a half wide is put over the shoulder seam and embroidered similar to the frock. The neck is finished off by the roll-over "brewer's" collar, also embroidered. The sleeves are full with small cuffs turned over to match collar. If preferred, the neck can be finished by a small band and frill of embroidery; then the sleeves should also have a frill with smocking above; but the former way is certainly the prettier. There is a hem of about two and a half inches round the bottom of the frock, which is hemmed into "open-work" of half an inch; this makes a very pretty, easy, and tasteful trimming to the skirt. It is done by drawing threads to the width required, and working in any pattern of the "linen-drawn work" so much in fashion just now.

This frock will wash and wear for many summers, if plenty of tucks are put above the "open-work" to allow for growing.

Good Irish linen is the best to use.

A. E. B.