

Editors' Table.

QUESTIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

AMONG these questions the most important are those regarding the liberal education of women through public appropriations; the professions and offices that shall be open to them when qualified: and the last new notion—"Shall women have the right of suffrage?"

We have had many applications for counsel and information on this last subject. Our half million of readers have a right to expect that the *LADY'S BOOK* will not be silent on a question that concerns the women of America far more than those of England, although the following note refers only to the latter:—

"TO THE EDITRESS OF THE *LADY'S BOOK*."

"DEAR MADAM: I would like to draw your attention to a speech lately made in the British Parliament by J. Stuart Mill. Your interest in all that pertains to woman would find much to reflect upon in the speech itself, for the proof of *progress* which it gives. Not that I, or you, I fancy, agree in the main question of Mr. Mill—that of bringing women to the polls—but the view he takes of the depression the sex suffers in Great Britain from one-sided laws is something novel, coming from John Bull, and bespeaks an awakening in the mind of that heavy old gentleman. The reasoning of the orator in favor of education and mental development in woman is clear and admirable. If you would exercise your excellent taste in making extracts from the speech, I think the readers of the *LADY'S BOOK* would be instructed and interested.

"With much respect"—

We have read the speech of Mr. Mill, and, as we think our readers will be gratified and instructed by knowing the history of this remarkable movement in England, we will give a sketch of it and extracts from the discussion in Parliament.

THE QUESTION OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN ENGLAND.

From an article in the *Westminster Review* for last January, we condense the following statements and arguments: In June of last year, 1866, a petition was presented to the House of Commons by J. Stuart Mill, setting forth that the possession of property carries with it in England the right to vote in the election of representatives in Parliament, that the exclusion from this right of women holding property is, therefore, anomalous; and that the petitioners pray that the representation of householders may be provided for without distinction of sex. This paper was signed by fifteen hundred women householders, and was known as the Ladies' Petition.

After showing that these fifteen hundred must represent a considerable proportion of their class, the reviewer supports the petition thus: The request is grounded on the principles of the Constitution. In England property is the basis of representation, and women as such are not disqualified for government, as is shown by their holding the sovereignty. If, therefore, their sex does not debar them from the higher, it should not from the lower privileges of political life, when those privileges depend upon conditions, such as the possession of property, which they actually fulfil. The onus of proving their unfitness is thereby thrown upon those who would exclude them. The only other classes who own property, yet cannot vote, are minors, idiots, lunatics, and criminals; but the legal position of these classes has nothing in common with that of women. Women have all the responsibilities and all the privileges of property except that of voting. They are liable for debts, can enter into con-

tracts, can purchase, alienate, and devise, sue and be sued. But minors, idiots, and criminals can do none of these things. They cannot deal with their possessions as they will; they merely hold the right to the possession of property at some future time when they shall have become different from what they now are, along with the right to transfer it to their heirs. Why should women, who differ from them in every legal incident besides, be classed with them as non-voters?

The reviewer attributes the historical origin of this anomaly to the unsettled state of society in the earlier period of English constitutional history. Women could not then administer their own property, and did not, therefore, share in the political privileges conferred by it. But as the reason for the exception has ceased, the exception should cease with it.

The common objections to the proposed extension are then combated. That the possession of a vote would expose women to improper coercion from their relations; that it would do the country no good, that it would do it harm; that it would harden and debase a womanly nature, are all denied and argued against. But we need not follow the details; enough has been said to show that the Englishwoman's claim is founded upon that fundamental principle of the British Constitution which associates the right of suffrage with the possession of property; and would consequently fall to the ground in America, where no such principle is recognized.

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On the 26th of last May the Bill was before Parliament, and Mr. Mill made his great speech in support of "Woman Suffrage." His arguments were ingenious and pungent; his sentiments noble, and evidently in unison with his reason as well as with his feelings. He set forth the injustice of English legislation in regard to women, and scathingly rebuked the meanness of the nobility and gentry of England, who seem to care nothing for the wrongs of the weaker sex, whilst the women of their own order and their own families are secured, by special contract and legislation, in the possession of rights and immunities never yet awarded by law or custom to the nation.

ARE THE WOMEN OF ENGLAND EDUCATED?

"It must be considered whether women as women had not their grievances, and whether that law and those practices which the law could reach treated women in every respect as favorably as men. Well, was that the case as to education, for example? It was continually said that the education of mothers was the most important part of the education of the country, because they educated the men. But was much importance really attached to their education—were there many fathers who cared as much or were willing to expend as much for the good education of their daughters as of their sons? Where were the universities or the public schools, where the schools of any high description, for women? It was said that girls were best educated at home. Well, where were the training schools for governesses? What had become of the endowments which the bounty of our forefathers established for the instruction, not of boys alone, but of boys and girls indiscriminately? He was informed by one of the highest authorities on the subject, that in the majority of the deeds of endowment the provision was for education generally, and not specially for boys. One great endowment—Christ Church Hospital—was designed expressly for both, but what was the fact? Why, that establishment maintained and educated 1100 boys and only 26 girls."

ARE THE YOUNG WOMEN PROTECTED?

"Then, when girls had attained womanhood, how did it fare with that large and increasing portion of the sex who, though sprung from the educated classes, had not inherited a provision, and not having obtained one by marriage, or disdaining to marry merely for a provision, depended on their exertions for support? Hardly any single decent educated occupation, save one, was open to them. They were either governesses or nothing. A fact had recently occurred which was worthy of commemoration. A young lady, Miss Garrett, from no pressure of necessity, but from an honorable desire to find scope for her activity in alleviating the sufferings of her fellow-creatures, applied herself to the study of medicine. Having duly qualified herself, she, with an energy and perseverance which could not be too highly praised, knocked successively at every one of the doors through which, in this country, a student could pass into medical practice. Having found every other door fast shut, she at last discovered one which had been accidentally left ajar. The Society of Apothecaries, it appeared, had forgotten to shut out those who they never thought would attempt to come in, and through that narrow entry this young lady obtained admission into the medical profession. But so objectionable did it appear to this learned body that women should be permitted to be the medical attendants even of women, that the narrow wicket which Miss Garrett found open had been closed after her, and no second Miss Garrett was to be suffered to pass through it. This was *instar omnium*. As soon as even women became capable of successfully competing with men in any career, that career, if it be lucrative or honorable, was closed against them."

LADIES AS ARTISTS.

"A short time ago women could be associates of the Royal Academy; but they were distinguishing themselves, they were taking so honorable a rank in their art, that this privilege too had been taken away from them. That was the kind of care taken of women by the men who so faithfully represent them. That was the treatment to which unmarried women were subject."

MARRIED WOMEN UNDER ENGLISH LAW.

"And then as to the married women, they, it might be said, were not concerned in the amendment which he had moved, but it did not concern many who had been married as well as others who would be married. By the common law of England, everything that a woman had belonged absolutely to her husband, who might tear it from her, spend the last penny of it in debauchery, leaving her to maintain by her labor herself and her children, and if by heroic exertion she earned enough to put by anything for their future support, unless she was judicially separated from him, he could pounce upon her savings and leave her penniless. Such cases were of very common occurrence. (Hear, hear!) If men were besotted enough to think such things right, there would be some excuse for them. But they know better. The richer classes had found a way of exempting their own daughters from this iniquitous state of the law. By the contrivance of marriage settlements they could make in each case a private law for themselves, and they always did so. Why was not that justice provided for the daughters of the poor which they took good care should be done to their own daughters?"

FAMILY LIFE IN ENGLAND.

"They were not living in Arcadia, but as they had been lately reminded, in *facie Romule*, and in that region workmen needed other protection than that of their masters, and women than that of their men. He should like to see a return laid before that House of the number of women who were annually beaten, kicked, or trodden to death by their male protectors; he should like that account to contain in an opposite column a return of the sentences passed in those cases in which the dastardly criminal did not get off altogether, and in a third column a comparative view of the amount of property, the unlawful taking of which had in the same session or assizes, by the same judges, been thought worthy of the same degree of punishment. They would thus obtain an arithmetical estimate of the value set by a male Legislature and male tribunals upon the murder of a woman by habitual torture often prolonged for years, which, if there be any shame in man, should make him hang his head. (Cheers.) Before it was contended that women did not suffer in their interests specially as women by not being represented."

In short, it is the monstrous evils of injustice, in many forms, done to woman, shaming the manhood of English

men, and making that nation of Christian men seem little better than Pagans in their estimate of the dignity and honor of womanhood, that moved Mr. Mill to seek a remedy in women suffrage. This clause in his Bill was rejected on division by a vote of 196 to 78.

That more than one-fourth of the members of Parliament voted in favor of such a measure shows that this movement is doing good by awakening the minds of men to these great questions of woman's destiny and duties. Still it is clear that even Mr. Mill does not yet apprehend the "divinity that doth hedge" womanhood and doth make man's companion God's moral agent on earth to help her husband and sons in their spiritual nature; therefore, woman's help to man in political governments must come through her wise influences that fit men to govern themselves and the world. These truths we shall show in our next number.

A PHOTOGRAPH OF TRUE WEDDED LIFE.

"DINNER is over. It is well nigh midnight; only a single light still sparkles through the autumnal trees of the park. It leads us to the pleasant villa near the prince's kitchen-garden. Count Bismark is still awake; but he is no longer the gay talker, the amiable, witty companion, such as we have seen him at dinner. In the dead of night he is again Prime Minister.

He who has come to Rugen to repose from his toils, sits at a desk covered with papers; his right hand is closed, his face looks almost gloomy, the thoughtful brow is clouded; the iron count is at work. He reflects long and profoundly, and then he dictates a dispatch.

But where is his private secretary to write what he dictates?

The Prime Minister has not taken a private secretary, nor any of the officers of his department with him to Rugen, but at a side-table, with a lamp, sits a lady, modest, plainly dressed, her brow beaming with intelligence. She quickly writes what the minister dictates to her.

We know this lady. We had learned already to esteem her, now we admire her. The Countess Bismark is not only the loving-wife to him, an excellent nurse to him in sickness, a devoted mother to their children—she is, besides, the iron count's faithful, indefatigable assistant in his graver toils."

Would the Countess Bismark, at the polls, form a picture of woman in her perfection of honor, usefulness, and happiness, as she does in the sketch before us?

THE DOCTRINE AT HOME AND ABROAD.

AMERICA is the land of promise and progress for woman in her true sphere of usefulness. While Old England has but one woman's name honored with the title of M. D. (Mistress of Medicine), and she, poor Miss Garrett! had to steal through an apothecary's back door into the profession, Young America has three medical colleges chartered for women, and more than two hundred have graduated and are now in successful practice in our republic.

We do not sustain this progress in medical knowledge for the honors it brings to the daughters of America, but for the enlarged opportunities it affords for their duties. We consider that midwifery is God's ministering angel to suffering motherhood, and that it should be confided to women for the good of humanity.

It is in England and the northern and middle portion of the United States that man-midwifery chiefly prevails. Yet it is but about ninety years since it was first ventured upon in America. It cannot long continue, now that public attention is called to the subject, and it is found that, in nine-tenths of the world, feminine physicians for their own sex are, and ever have been, employed successfully, and that there is actually less feebleness among

women in those countries than in our own, where constitutional ill health in the mothers is fast making us a nation of invalids. This is not directly the fault of the regular physicians, perhaps, but results, indirectly, from the increased ignorance of women respecting their own diseases and those of their children, since the practice has been monopolized by men. This ignorance leads people of both sexes often to employ quacks and resort to poisonous nostrums.

Ignorance and mystery always induce superstition, and the false is then worshipped for the true. Why also do we see, in this city of Philadelphia, the boasted seat of medical science, where six colleges for the regular training of doctors are located, that quackery lifts its head like a second tower of Babel, and steam-engines are driving onward the manufacture of pills and potions, as though these were to support the nation? The inventors and preparers of these medicines win the confidence of the people from the regular physician, and gain wealth while he studies in vain—because he has kept his art in concealment, particularly from woman, who is the real conservator of health, as of home.

The study of medicine belongs to woman's department of knowledge; its practice is in harmony with the duties of mother and nurse, which she must fulfill. It is not going out of her sphere to prescribe for the sick; she must do this by the fireside, the bedside, in the "inner chamber," where her true place is. It is man who is there out of his sphere. And now let the effort be to give all women that knowledge of the laws of health and of their own frames which will lead them to improve the modes of training children and preserve them from the need of medical treatment.

Then, when real diseases occurred, and danger was apprehended, the most worthy and eminent physicians would be employed, trusted, honored. Quackery would be swept away as superstitious notions are when the people are enlightened, and the learned professor of medicine would no longer be eclipsed by every pretender who can prepare a pill and pay for a puff.

At any rate, we trust that the American faculty will not show such mean-spirited persecution towards the women of our land, who seek to qualify themselves for the profession which our Creator manifestly intended should be in the care of women, as the English physicians have displayed in their treatment of Miss Garrett! In our free country the good doctress will be sustained. We need one such accomplished lady practitioner and medical adviser for every thousand inhabitants—at present we have not three hundred! Here is an opportunity for petitioners to legislatures, and philanthropists. We want endowed medical colleges for women; every facility, every encouragement should be given to the daughters of America for the study of the healing art. It will become one of the most honorable professions for educated single women, and, as we trust, quite supersede the notion of placing them in the political arena of life.

THE WOMEN'S MEDICAL COLLEGE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

which we alluded to in our Table last month, shows, in the "Annual Announcement," that at the last session there were in all forty-four students and ten graduates. This college is now in a prosperous condition, and can give good opportunities to its students. The faculty—seven professors, four ladies and three gentlemen—comprise names distinguished for worth and ability in their several departments. We commend this college to young ladies who are seeking a place of medical education.

MOTHERS.

"TWELVE or fifteen years ago," says ex-Governor Briggs, "I left Washington three or four weeks in the spring. While at home, I possessed myself of the letters of Mr. Adams's mother, and read them with exceeding interest. I remember an expression in one of the letters addressed to her son, while yet a boy twelve years of age, in Europe. Says she: 'I would rather see you laid in your grave than you should grow up a profane and graceless boy.'

"After returning to Washington, I went over and said to Mr. Adams, 'I have found who made you!'

"'What do you mean?' said he.

"I replied, 'I have been reading the letters of your mother.'

"If I had spoken that dear name to some little boy who had been for weeks away from his dear mother, his eyes could not have flashed more brightly or his face glowed more quickly than did the eye and face of that venerable old man when I pronounced the name of his mother. He stood up in his peculiar manner, and emphatically said, 'Yes, Mr. Briggs, all that is good in me I owe to my mother.'

"Oh! what a testimony was that from this venerable man to his mother, who had in his remembrance all the stages of his manhood, 'All that is good in me I owe to my mother!' Mothers, think of this when your bright-eyed little boy is about. Mothers make the first impressions upon their children, and these are last to be effaced."

"All that is good in me I owe to my mother." So good men say, and yet when did these men as legislators ever make woman's education a subject of public interest by providing for it as liberally as they do for the education of men? Does not the feminine mind need culture of the best kind as surely as the masculine?

ONE WORD.

One word, one little word

She whispered low,
As by the river side
Softly we go.

One word, one little word,
Tremulous, sweet,
Thrills my heart, making it
Wildly to beat!

One word, one answering word;
Clouds backward roll,
That have for weary months
Shrouded my soul.

One word—hope, blossoms spring,
Fears die away—
Radiantly, joyously,
Comes in the day!

MITTIE HALL.

THE AUTHORESS OF ADAM BEDE.—Miss Mary Ann Evans, whose *nom de plume* is "George Eliot," is the daughter of a dissenting minister in the North of England—she was born in 1820. Her first literary work was a translation of Strauss's "Life of Jesus;" after this she was joint editor of the *Westminster Review* for a time; then she published, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, her "Scenes of Clerical Life," which were much admired. She next sent forth her wonderful work—"Adam Bede"—which established her reputation as a novelist. She is said to be one of the best educated women among the British authoresses; she has a familiar knowledge of modern languages, and is well instructed in the classics and mathematics. This superior culture gives her feminine genius its remarkable breadth as well as power. Miss Evans and Miss Browning are illustrations of the wise excellence which woman's mind may attain, if it only has suitable cultivation.

NOTES AND NOTICES.

WOMAN'S FAME.—It is the nature of feminine genius that its services are called forth by moral motives; its exercise, with few exceptions, has for its object the promotion of goodness, of purity, of piety. In truth, there is no enduring fame for a woman that is not based on the moral and intellectual elevation of those over whom she has influence.

"I do solemnly aver," says Miss Muloch, having seen more than one generation of young girls grow up to wo-