

napkin to appear upon her table twice without being laundered. Napkin-rings are banished to the nursery, where they should always have remained."

Now, no one can deny that a napkin fresh and crisp from the laundry is a daintier object than one that has lost its first freshness, even if clasped by the prettiest of rings. If one has plenty of servants and plenty of napkins, this is without doubt exceedingly pleasant advice to follow. But what if we were to do a little sum in multiplication? The average family is said to consist of five members.

$$5 \times 3 \times 7 = 105.$$

In round numbers, nine dozen napkins a week for a family of five.

Mesdames, who write for the papers, and tell us what must and what must not be done, you may not believe it, but there are women who aspire to living handsomely and daintily, if not elegantly, who have pretty, well-kept houses, and daintily appointed tables, yet who never had nine dozen napkins at once in all their lives, and never expect to have. What shall they do about it? Perhaps as an alternative they would better dispense with napkins altogether, as those stately and dignified dames, our venerated foremothers, did! Elegance and even neatness are terms hard to define. Latitude and longitude have a great deal to do with them. The Japanese lady lifts her almond eyes and laughs with mocking disdain at the Western barbarians who actually wash napkins and handkerchiefs that they may use them a second time. She uses her pretty trifle once and burns it.

This is a very trifling matter? Yes; and if it stood alone, it would not be worth mentioning. But a pound of feathers is just as heavy as a pound of lead. Let those who can afford to indulge their dainty tastes do so, and be thankful. But when it becomes a matter of choice between three fresh napkins a day—or anything else that may stand as their equivalent—and the new book, or the longed-for picture, the leisure to breathe the fresh air and enjoy the June roses, or to take the children out in the wide pastures and watch the changeful lights and shadows on the mountain sides,—then what shall be said about it? It is over-anxiety about matters like these that comes between the soul of many a woman and that higher, calmer, sweeter life for which she really yearns.

It is really true of the great middle class that are scattered all over our land, from Maine to Florida, from Massachusetts to Oregon, that they cannot have this and that. They are shut out from many, indeed from most, of the advantages of great cities. They do not have picture galleries, museums, and public libraries, nor the stimulus of busy, magnetic crowds.

But they may have—they may absorb into their own beings—the strength of the hills and of the sea, the calm of the plains, the peace of the sky, the patience of the earth, that lies waiting through all the wintry hours, assured that seed-time and harvest shall not fail. They may secure time to read and to think. They may pluck the roses of content.

Shall they lose all these in a vain attempt to grasp, not the best things of a far different life, but some of its merest externals, thus adding to all their cares and labors and getting nothing that is worth having in return?

Julia C. R. Dorr.

Beautiful Spring.

"A TENDER veil of green adorns the willows;
The grass is springing up in sunny places;
The ice no longer holds in chains the billows;
The violets soon will show their modest faces.
Oh Spring, fair Spring, we hasten forth to greet thee,
Our frost-bound hearts throb with fresh joy to meet thee."

Thus wrote the Poet, and he read it over —
Being quite young — with modest approbation,
Gazing across a field of (last year's) clover,
And exercising his imagination.
And being caught by several April showers,
He only murmured something of "May flowers."

But the next morning, with a north wind blowing,
And leaden skies above, he changed his ditty.
"No!" growled he, "I will *not* look how it's snowing!
Pull down the blind, if you've a spark of pity.
Stir up the fire, and make it kindle faster;
And *will* you mix me that red-pepper plaster?"

"If anything could start my circulation,
'Twould be that Pilgrim Father's business, surely.
To think they undertook to found a nation,
And counted on its future so securely,
After they'd seen — no, it was *not* sublime — it
Was idiotic, settling in this climate!"

Margaret Vandegrift.

On Higher Education for Women.

DEAR MR. EDITOR: I know that you'll think it perfectly horrid of me and too forward and dreadful for anything to write to you in this bold way without knowing you at all, but I *do* hope that you'll excuse me, as there is something I feel it my duty to write to you about. (It seems too funny to write "Mr." instead of "Miss" or "Mrs.," as I most always do, for upon my word and honor, I never, never wrote to a gentleman before except once when I —) But anyway, I feel ever so safe, as you can't possibly know what my monogram stands for, and my signature is *ex officio*, or whatever you call it when you don't give your real name. But as I was saying, I want to speak to you about this just too dreadful fuss they are all making about what they call higher education for women and co-education. Horrid, tiresome old things, I'd just like to shake them.

Why, I declare! It's simply too ridiculous for anything, the way they go on; just as if any sensible girl, with any sort of romantic feelings, wanted to know anything about Greek and philosophy and things, and then grow up for all the world like those absurdly dreadful old frights that wear spectacles, and have straight hair brushed back, and sleeves that never fit at the shoulders, and carry their change in a bag, and ask for the "franchise" (whatever that is), and make all kinds of ridiculous plans, and don't know any more about flirting or dancing the German than the man in the moon. It quite makes the cold shivers run down my back to think of them. (Don't you consider this description just too awfully cutting and sarcastic for anything?)

I know well enough that they tell all of us girls that what women need is more *real* knowledge; but,

I'm sure, *I* simply can't see the good of it. It's awfully true as the poet says, "What is knowledge but grieving?" (Don't you consider Owen Meredith just too splendid and grand for this world? I quite dote on that sweet and dreamy Lucille.)

I'm sure you can get all the knowledge and accomplishments you want at lots and lots of establishments like Madame de Sagesse's. (Why, they even teach calisthenics there!) That's where I graduated last spring, and they gave me a diploma which was just every bit as large as the one Cousin Jack took at college ever and ever so many years ago, and exactly like it, only it was in English and didn't have a lot of letters after my name like his — A. B. or Ph. B. or whatever they are, just as if you were a drawing pencil and had to be stamped to show if you were very, *very* soft or only middling. But it was thick and crackly and real, *real* parchment; and it was tied with the most lovely shade of *clair de lune* blue that you ever saw in all your born days, "*gros grain*," too, and must have cost, oh! ever and ever so much a yard. French I think, because it exactly matched the bows on my white muslin. (Worth!) It was just too becoming to live, as Cousin Jack said. (I've ripped off one of the bows and send it to you around this manuscript, it looks so neat. You can keep it.)

But I am afraid you may think me frivolous and wandering from my subject; but really I feel so awfully nervous at the idea that this will be printed, and that then I will be a real live authoress just like George Eliot, or May Agnes Fleming, or Rosa Bonheur, and lots and lots more, that I really and truly can't write quite my best. (Though, upon my word, I should hope that now, when I have finished my education and received a prize for English composition, my writing is not so awfully bad that I have to apologize for it, because if I thought so, I would just throw it in the fire and burn it, and sink right through the floor, and it would be the death of me, and I would, as Byron says, "wither like a flower and like a flower die." Isn't that sentiment quite too soulful and heavenly? I know it's awfully wicked for a girl to read Byron; but I do just whenever I get a chance, and I think he's perfectly grand and divine, but I haven't read much lately, because the key of the book-case fell down the register last year, and so I can't open it.) Oh, dear me, what a frightfully long parenthesis! Almost a page. But please don't think that I can't keep my mind fixed on one subject, for I can, as you will easily see when I tell you that I was marked "double 10" for Logic, one whole term, while at Madame de Sagesse's.

But I must not let my thoughts wander any more or you may get the idea that I am not serious-minded. It's just too ridiculously preposterous the idea that a girl with any sort of pretension to good looks should just go and ruin her chances by seeming to know anything about all those dreadful mathematics like Soshiology (Dear me! I hope that's spelt correctly, though somehow or other it don't look quite right to

me). It only makes all the men afraid of her. So where's the good of it? What's the use of bothering your brains if the men won't like you any better for it?

Then they give another reason for the need of "higher" education, *vis*: That many women are poor and want to earn their own living and want a diploma from a college to certify as to their fitness. As for the diploma, I have shown that you can get it at a school if you think it's going to do you any good. As for being poor, I don't see the need of that either. Why don't they go and live with some relations? Or marry some *rich* man? Or if they are ridiculously stuck up and want to be "independant," why there are lots of ways of making money. They can do spatter-work or worsted work, or paint plaques. It's awfully easy. I never took any drawing lessons at school (because the drawing teacher wasn't a bit young and poetic-looking, as an artist ought to be) and have taken only six painting lessons in my whole life, and yet I paint beautifully (this may seem conceited but it isn't). This winter I made a plaque and only painted seven weeks on it, and sent it to a fair and it sold the very first night for ten dollars. I'm sure that shows it was good. In fact I didn't like to part with it, so I made Cousin Jack promise to buy it for me and he did. He's just devoted to me.

I forgot to tell you that I'm the secretaryess of the North-American — literary — society (no real writers, you know, but only amateurs who could be if they wanted to), and so I have a great deal of experience in reading the very best essays, and I have often noticed that most of those that cry about the "right" of women are those "left" by men. (Isn't that an awfully well turned sentence?)

Anyway, I feel sure that you can get lots of culture now in New York, if you really want it and can get invited to the right places. What with the "Causeries de Lundi" and the "Goethe Lectures" and "Tasso Readings," and "Raphael Conversazione" and "Nineteenth Century Club" and "Biology Class" and so on *ad infantum*. (You see I can quote Latin too, if I want to, but I don't think it's good taste to air your learning — it seems too dogmatic.)

But I shall have to stop now as I am afraid you will (Ought you say *will* here or *shall*?) get angry with me, if I keep you any longer from your printing; and besides, I have a most important engagement with my dressmaker, and anyway if I cross this sheet a third time I am afraid you may, here and there, have some difficulty in reading it *current calamo*.

Believe (I'm never quite sure whether it is *ie* or *ei*, but I haven't time to look for the dictionary) me —

Yours for health,

PINKIE ROSEBUD.

P. S. — You may have this even if you don't think you can afford to pay all it's worth; but I should like to receive something, so as to be able to say that I have been paid for my writing, because you know that always shows it's good.

P. R.