

It was not exercised at the proper moment; and willingly shall we unite our voices with those of our sisters in other lands who are appealing for the cessation of war. Fervently would we pray that even out of such seeming evil good may come—that the present fierce struggle may lead to a long-enduring peace—to the eventual disarmament of nations. In the midst of these conflicts we rejoice to think of the trained hands accompanying these devoted bands, who convey help to the sick and wounded of both nations. To all we would say, God speed them in their noble work. It is to be hoped that enough has been said to show, in a measure, the extent of our duties, and that while the social claims of woman can be no longer denied, all must recognize how intimately they are associated with her responsibilities. As true social reformers, we should not seek to separate ourselves, but to endeavor to work hand in hand with the other sex, and as

"In harmony—in harmony
The universal work began,"

so may each and all, following out the instincts of the better nature, divinely implanted within our breasts, with harmonious and united efforts seek to accomplish the common end—the regeneration of the great human family.

Miss Faithfull said she was sure that before any papers were read it would be the wish of every lady present to return thanks to Lady Bowring for the able paper which she had placed before them, and which touched upon a number of subjects which, she presumed, would be dealt with in the papers which would be read, and the discussions which would take place upon them, in the course of this conference. (Applause.) She would not, therefore, take up the time of the meeting in making observations upon any of those topics, especially as they were anxious to hear the papers read; but she could not resist the opportunity, which she wished to take on every possible occasion, of saying that, in her opinion, nothing could exceed the necessity of special training for women—that all the plans they made with regard to industrial employments and entrance into the higher professions would be utterly abortive if they could not get training for women while they were young. (Hear, hear.)

A very able paper was read by Miss Wolstenholme on the "Married Women's Property Act;" by Miss Tod, on "University Examinations for Women;" by Miss Porter, on "Education," and by Miss Boucherett, on "The Use Women would probably make of the Franchise."

At the outset, Miss Boucherett remarks that objections are often raised against giving women the franchise on the ground that they would make a bad use of it, and one way in which it is said they would misuse it is in promoting war. Their excitable temperaments, and the fact that its dangers and hardships do not fall upon them, would, it is thought by some, have this effect, so that to give women political power would be to add another inflammable material to the political fabric of Europe. To disprove this argument, Miss Boucherett quotes several extracts from *Le Droit des Femmes*, a French newspaper advocating the interests of women, which show that women in France were strongly opposed to the war, and had issued numerous protests in hopes of arresting it. She also points out that if it was true that persons who are not liable to be exposed to the dangers of war are particularly fond of it, and that those who are liable to its dangers are peculiarly averse to it, civilians would be the most warlike part of the population, and soldiers the most peaceful, which is contrary to the known fact. Miss Boucherett remarks that if Prussia were to give full satisfaction to the French government on the Spanish question, it would not suffice. The object is to humiliate the King of Prussia. These questions of *amour propre* do not concern us. The two nations are friendly at bottom, and questions of dynastic interest ought to be considered after national interest. Let voices be raised everywhere against the war. Let us protest, in the name of humanity, against the pastime of princes, which causes the blood of the people to flow. And here women have not only the right to interfere, but it is their duty to do so. Let them protest; that is what they can do. Who will dare to say now that politics do not concern wives and mothers? When politics entail such consequences, they concern everybody. The protest of women ought to be placed by the side of the protest of working men. The truth is, that women generally detest war, being inevitably shut out from everything that makes war attractive. To nurse the wounded and sick in the hospital is the nearest approach to active service that is possible for them,

and how unattractive is this service! A full share of the disagreeable conditions of war fall on women; they suffer from the taxes just as much as men, and mothers are even more unhappy than fathers when their sons are taken by the conscription, or enlist into the army for active service, while the worst evils caused by the existence of large standing armies fall heavily on women. Is it, then, wonderful that women hate war, and should protest against it? By excluding the most peace-loving element of society from representation, the warlike elements obtain an undue preponderance, and a nation is forced into war when of the individuals composing it the great majority desire to remain at peace. It is generally recognized that men excel women in their comprehension of the material things of life, and that women excel men in their comprehension of moral influences. If we consider the civilization of the present time we shall perceive that immense progress has been made in the way of material improvement, but that very little progress is made in moral improvement. Wonderful mechanical contrivances are invented, but we have not found out how to manage our poor-houses and prisons, and boys and girls continue to grow up wild in the streets of London, Paris, and the other great cities of Europe, and to turn into criminals. The reason is not far to seek. That section of humanity which best understands moral influences is deprived of political power. The present war is a singularly clear illustration of the effects of the undivided rule of the male sex. The engines of war employed in it are glorious triumphs of human intellect, but that a war should have taken place at all shows a wonderful failure of moral influences. If Europe can but read aright the lesson taught by the calamities into which she is plunged, such calamities may be avoided. The best guarantee for peace in the future would be to establish women's suffrage throughout the civilized world.

SPECIAL TRAINING FOR WOMEN, AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE WANT OF IT.

Miss Emily Faithfull, of London, then read a very interesting paper on this subject, as follows:

"It seems to me almost needless to justify a fact I was about simply to state, viz., that for want of special training a vast number of women are at this very moment positively starving—if not doing worse. It has been reiterated again and again, until it ought to be as apparent as the well-known theory that two and two make four. But in case any one in this room may require a proof that the old idea that women are supported by men is founded on fiction rather than fact, I must ask the indulgence of the members of this association, to whom the figures will probably be familiar, while I repeat the 'old, old story' of the results of the census of 1851 and 1861. In 1851 the number of widows and spinsters obliged to support themselves was two millions; in 1861 it had increased to two millions and a half, and there is every reason to believe that when the census returns are completed for 1871 the result will be still more startling. I am leaving entirely out of the question, you observe, the wives who work for their own subsistence, because you might say—and with some reason in the present state of our legislation on this subject—that husbands ought to support their wives, and consequently you might deny the practical use of giving any special training or definite employment to girls likely to marry—quite forgetting, however, that marriage is a lottery in which it would appear there is an ever-increasing number of blanks. So I shall rest my assertion upon the figures relating to widows and spinsters only; and I shall not even dwell upon these, for as far as the ladies of Newcastle are concerned, I am happy to say I shall have the opportunity of going into this matter at greater length in one of the two lectures I have been requested to give at your well-known Philosophical Institution next December, and the permanent members of this congress are already quite aware of the increasing preponderance of women forced to maintain themselves. We have, therefore, by an investigation, from which there is no appeal, this starting point. A large and rapidly increasing number of women are compelled to be their own bread-winners. How are they to accomplish it? I confess I see but one way, and that is by special training. I used to be told as a child that there was no royal way to learning, and it is equally true that there is no royal way to bread-winning. When some bank failure or some unexpected misfortune drives a man without preparation to earn his own living, we pity him much, and anxiously watch the result. If he is successful there is no limit to our surprise, and we pronounce his case exceptional. How then can we expect girls (brought up in the belief that all they want will always be provided for them) to enter upon any successful career without previous training? Novelists may draw charming pictures of heroines supporting entire families, without any special

gift or preparation, but I can only say—and I say it with deep regret—that my twelve years' practical experience does not furnish me with a single illustration of so remarkable a phenomenon. And yet my work brings me into contact with women of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, throughout the entire kingdom. This experience, on the contrary, has afforded me pictures of a totally different character; it has supplied me with dismal but unanswerable facts; but I could not, without breach of faith, tell you of the ladies who come to my office asking for work of any description, to meet the most pressing necessities, who are utterly unable to undertake it through deficiency of early training. As an illustration I will, however, mention that quite recently I was requested to fill up an appointment; and out of the numerous women struggling for some means of subsistence, I had considerable difficulty in obtaining twenty efficient candidates. People continually say to me: 'I can't think that there are really so many destitute ladies as you say; whenever I hear of friends requiring governesses, or lady nurses, or matrons, they have such a difficulty in finding any one fit for the post they offer.' Of course, it is difficult to find any one up to the mark in ranks recruited by undisciplined, untutored women, who generally commence their struggle in the face of some sharp sorrow, which has probably deprived them of any little energy they may have possessed, and left them utterly unfit to acquire new habits of life, or to contend with the difficulties they are so suddenly forced to meet.

"Some one, perhaps, is ready with the objection that matronships are not posts ladies naturally care to seek. I am glad of the opportunity of saying that, with the present needs of educated women, we require openings of a higher and more suitable character; but I am forced to deal with things as they are; and on one side we have a number of women begging for work of any kind; on the other, a few somewhat unsatisfactory openings, I grant, but from which this struggling multitude is shut out for want of special training. But I shall now perhaps stand in danger of the charge of fault-finding without offering any suggestion as to how the remedy is to be applied. It will, however, be seen on reflection that no law can be laid down beyond the broad one of demanding some kind of special training for every girl in the kingdom. The adaptation of the principle must be left to the individual means and position of each family. I myself venture to think that we ought to fit girls for the exercise of some trade or calling according to their status in society, and that we ought to open our various professions and handicrafts to women far more freely than we do at present. But as I fear it will be some time before the necessity for doing so is apparent as the prejudices which oppose such a sensible line of conduct, I must content myself, at the present moment, with urging upon all who hear me an excellent piece of advice given by Lady Morgan years ago, and actually put into practice by our own royal family: 'Give every girl a trade—a profession, if the word suits you better; cultivate everything in moderation, but one thing in perfection, no matter what it is for which she has a talent—drawing, music, embroidery, and housekeeping even; give her a staff to lean on; let her feel that this will carry her through life without dependences.' 'It is necessary to give my boys a solid education,' argues the parent, who scans the future for profit; but for girls, the alpha and omega of instruction is still the indispensability of marriage—a doctrine prolific of consequences, from which I am convinced every good-hearted man would shrink if we once persuaded him to look them honestly in the face. But what if the marriage never comes? The father's death cannot be delayed forever, or the provision secured for the daughter which has not been previously stored. This is what comes every day of the week. She is thrown on the world penniless, unfriended, and finds that the customs of society have utterly unfitted her to earn her own bread. Her brothers have some sort of footing in their different callings, but have probably formed ties which shut out all prospect of help from such quarters. They have enough to do to sustain their own position in the world; it is as much as they can manage to keep the wolf from their own door. Nothing remains for women thus situated but work on their own account or starvation, and, as the bulk of our people are now living, up to the last farthing they possess. As a dangerous system of extravagance has grown up on the right hand and on the left, there arises from every class of women the cry that work is wanted, and yet no work is to be had, for want of special training must exclude all candidates for remunerative employment from admission to the practical labor market. No one here, I am persuaded, is so destitute of common sense as to need any further explanation