

Flax Culture in Oregon.

The subject assigned to me is an interesting and important factor in the industrial activities and commerce of the world. I do not feel that I am capable of doing it justice, but I say with confidence, that the cultivation of flax, and its manufacture, should command the considerate attention of our business people. We know that flax can be grown in our state with more than ordinary success, and be made a profitable investment. Our climate and soil present advantages and conditions for its culture that no other country can excel, and we should avail ourselves of them to make it a leading industry. I do not believe any other business interest, taken as a whole, affords so many opportunities for the employment of labor at remunerative wages, and especially the labor of women. We all agree that the best form of philanthropy is to aid people to help themselves.

We have the best country on earth for people to live in comfortably on a moderate income, but we must have some business to engage their energies, and to reward their endeavors. The past summer it was my privilege to meet a body of women from the eastern states, the wives of conductors—many of them women of keen observation and great intelligence. It is needless to say that I fell in with the Boston contingent. We spent a very pleasant hour discussing the conditions of the country, and comparing them with Boston and its surroundings. The conclusion arrived at was, that the prices of living in this state, from rent to food, are one-third less than Boston's. Our acquaintances from that city were enthusiastic. What a delight to live in a country, where one can get strawberries for 5 cents a quart for one month! "Two weeks is all of our season, and 15 cents the lowest I ever bought berries," exclaim the Bostonians. "We will all pull right up and come out here. What manufacturing establishments have you that women can work in?"

And right here I hesitate—yes; what—how many have we? Can anyone tell? One bicycle house in Hartford has 5000 hands; men, women, boys and girls; we buy the bicycles—we don't make them. We are nearer silver and gold mines by thousands of miles, but the products of the mines goes east, and is fashioned into silver ware for our tables—we buy it back again.

We have beds of kaolin, but all our crockery ware comes from east of the Rockies. We have sand for glass, but even our jelly tumblers take the same, long trip. Some of our wool is made up in Oregon, but not a pound should go out of the state, except by the bolt.

Consider, that 22 years ago the nine best judges of flax fibre that could be found in Europe, pronounced Oregon flax unexcelled, and yet we are still buying our binding twine, and our seine twine, from Europe and Patterson, N. J. Many would say: A little twine; that is a trifling matter; but \$250,000 a year would barely foot the bill. Multiply that by 22, and see what is the matter with Oregon. Why have not men investigated to see what is the matter with our state economics?

It is certainly time for the women to take the matter in hand, and when they do, they mean business. In the matter of industries of the state, they have just as much interest and as much at stake, as the men. Sons and daughters are growing up around them, and by what means shall they earn their daily bread?

We must have work for the willing young hands. We must develop our own resources, and give employment to our own people. The south has reached this conclusion, and is now, in the manufacture of her own cotton making wonderful progress; and if we look at all the varied uses of flax fibre, we will find that it is more important than the cotton industry. Five thousand acres in flax would not even supply a year's demand for the coarse, loose, hand-woven linen, that is now being put on the walls of houses. An agent is sent into the heart of Siberia to pick it up amongst the peasants, and it comes thousands of miles, with a snug little duty to pay when it reaches New York harbor; but we must have it—Dame Fashion says so.

One leading buyer of linen writes:

"Why don't you have a factory for linen towels? I will give you a first order for 10,000 dozen, and will duplicate it as soon as finished."

Hardly a day passes that I am not in receipt of letters from men and women in the eastern states, expressing interest in our work; from society leaders to everyday workers these missives come. Many people are interested from the novelty of women undertaking to establish a state industry. This is the age in which women are coming to the front as workers. Why not undertake something tangible—something that promises results that will benefit the community, instead of selfishly devoting all the time to clubs, to self-culture?

To introduce a new industry, especially one that requires the co-operation of the farming element, is not an easy task; it requires some tact, and a great deal of time. I can recall a quaint old New England farmer, who spoke in a disdainful way of a woman's time not being worth much more than a hen's. The hen, though, puts in her time scratching for her chicks, and that is what we will have to do. I notice that the rooster is in demand for a pot-pie if he is not too old.

Women not being engaged in business have the leisure and the patience to work out new theories; their time does not represent so many dollars and cents, and the daily bread and meat of the family. The women should have a voice in affairs benefiting the community at large, the same as the men. The petty details, the planning of work for such a new enterprise, can be carried on perhaps better by women than men.

WOMAN IN POLITICS.

Every woman has a place in politics each according to her taste and surroundings. Not one should shirk her personal responsibility. If every intelligent woman in the United States, realized, and lived up to the fact that she was in a measure responsible for the political conditions of the country, there would be a vast difference in the methods of managing the "machines" of office seekers and wire-pullers. Each and every one can, and ought, in some way, wield an influence for good. Not necessarily by going out on election day to work for a favorite candidate. No! No! Far back of that. No real politician waits for election days. "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." The mother must begin at the cradle. Read, think and speak in her own home. Let her sons and daughters grow up with a correct understanding of the needs of the day. What pure legislation is, and how to be had. That only by electing pure and capable men, can we expect to gain the desired results.

If we read and think, we do not necessarily have to talk politics on the street corners, but when opportunity and occasion demand, we are prepared with an opinion and can express it. Many a man is assisted in forming an opinion on a political issue, by a word spoken in season by a woman. (however, he is usually unconscious of the fact.)

So much for the home and fireside. Years ago, before woman was thought of in politics, the writer knew a lady whose husband was running on the republican ticket, for county clerk in an

down discrimination in prices for labor. If men could only realize that if women had justice, (equal pay for the same work) they would not have to pine in idleness, while women were doing the work for half wages, and supporting husbands and brothers. Legislation may not be the way to reach this problem. Public opinion will at any rate be the first step, and this will be woman's work.

L. L.

A RARE RELIC.—Mr. John Ward Dinsmore, an artist of Cincinnati, who has made many trips to the Nazareth Convent, Bardstown, Ky., for the purpose of teaching drawing to the pupils of that institution, has discovered among the things cleared out from a room in which one of the Sisters had died, an old picture which art authorities ascribe to Peter Paul Rubens. The painting, an "Adoration of the Magi" was on a panel of inlaid plaster, and barely discernible. It is believed to have been brought from Holland, Belgium, with a hundred or more master pieces by a Roman Catholic Bishop of Kentucky between 1790 and 1810, for distribution among churches and religious institutions. The picture, which is about 40 inches high by 25 inches wide, is now on exhibition at an art store in Cincinnati.

THE GRAND OLD MAN.—Gladstone, who has been seriously ill for several months, is gradually sinking under the weight of years, and from vital exhaustion. He suffers from neuralgic pains which he bears heroically. An examination, by the Roentgen rays, disclosed

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Mrs. Caudice Wheeler, the head of decorative art in America, was the push behind the silk industry, which has assumed such mammoth proportions. She has reached her four score years and ten, but hopes to live long enough to see the linen industry placed side by side with the silk.

This industry has only 50 years of factory life, and it really amounted to very little, until after the war. Mrs. Wheeler conferred with manufacturers, experimented with weavers, and established a school of applied design for each work. There are now 584 factories, employing 55,000 hands. In the neighborhood of Patterson, N. J., alone, there are 82 factories manufacturing silks, 16 dye houses, 5 making silk braids, 1 silk spinning mill, 12 silk throwing firms, and 24 firms engaged in building silk machinery.

Mrs. Wheeler, in a recent article in Harper's Bazaar, speaks encouragingly of the possibilities of flax growing in Oregon, and compliments the women of the state on their enterprise, and the new departure they are making in regard to developing the state resources, which, as she declares, places them in the front rank for enterprise and will be an incentive to women in other states, to work in similar lines.

Let us hope that the possibilities she foreshadows may be fully realized, and our beloved Oregon become a center of industrial activities, for the cultivation and manufacture of flax, thus adding to our material wealth, and the happiness of our people.

Mrs. Wm. P. Lord.

Her home was directly on the street in a very central location. On the morning of election day she dressed herself becomingly, and with a hand full of tickets, stood on her lower front door step all day and every man who passed, she spoke to, in a quiet, pleasant way, asking them to vote for her husband if he could. The supposition was that she was responsible, to quite an extent, for the large majority polled for Charley Norton at that election. While her action was much talked of, no harsh criticisms were made. Why should any wife, mother or sister do this?

Women of America, the constitution of the United States is meant to protect us, just the same as a man, "in the pursuit of life and happiness, and we are weak and useless, if we do not in some way, work with the end in view of purifying the politics of the day.

There are but few called upon to take to the platform, to that end—but those who do, should be sustained in their efforts. Who shall say that they are not prompted by the grandest motives? They, like all of advanced ideas, have to suffer criticism for a time, but the next generation will understand them better than this.

Let us then, each in her way, if it is only by a good thought, help as we may to stimulate, purify and elevate the politics of the future.

Woman is coming to the front so rapidly in all lines of work in which her nimble fingers, active mind and staunch integrity, makes her not only man's equal, but often his superior—that we will be forced to greater interest in politics to secure just legislation, and put

the fact that he is not a victim to cancer as has been believed. His medical advisers can only hope to relieve his sufferings as the end of a noble life approaches.

Up to the year 1896 the graduates of the woman's medical college, of New York, passed highest in their examinations before the state board of medical examiners appointed to grant license to practice medicine in that state. Let us all be proud of our sex.

Zola's contemplated visit to the United States gives Americans in general much pleasure. The part which he has lately played in the Dreyfus affair has made him an object of interest apart from his well known fame as a novelist

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