

mathematics to the first group, and others, for example, English, Scripture, Art, to the second group. But, would it not be possible, partly for the purpose of lightening the curriculum, but also in order to achieve more satisfactory results for the individual girl in her efforts to obtain for herself a liberal education without excessive strain, to evolve a scheme, by which almost every subject in the school could be studied either as an "efficient" or as an "appreciation" subject, the method to be freely chosen by the girl herself within certain limits? If this method were followed it might work out in this way: About fourteen girls would be allowed to choose within certain groups the subjects which they would study fundamentally, that is to a great extent on the old traditional lines up to a certain standard at which they could be examined. For example, of the four subjects within the English group two might be chosen to be studied as "efficient" subjects, two as "appreciation" subjects, though, I think, that I ought to make it quite clear that I consider that the "appreciation" method, especially in this group, should not be excluded from the study of "efficient" subjects. In the language group, a similar choice between the methods adopted might be made.

Though I speak diffidently of Mathematics and Science, it seems to me that the alternative methods of study might be adopted in these cases too, provided always that sufficient mental training were ensured by the study of a part of the subjects within the group as "efficient" subjects. This provision made, room might be found for some general instruction in and study of such subjects as astronomy, geology, and to some extent, the why and wherefore of facts and objects of everyday life.

The main subjects of the fourth group: music and art might naturally be regarded at first as essentially "appreciation" subjects, and yet I think that in this group too, some girls will be found to benefit more by a fundamental study, involving personal mastery of the actual technique, while others will gain more through an awakened sense of the appreciation of the great works of musicians and artists of outstanding merit.

The other day I read a short essay by a girl of fifteen who expressed quite emphatically the difference in value of what she felt she gained from a lesson the results of which would be definitely tested, and from one in which she was listening without any thought of subsequent tests. It was clear to her that she felt that she would gain far more inspiration from the latter type. To her the effort of attempting to commit facts to memory during a lesson was a disturbing element. This essay was an interesting argument in favour of the appreciation lesson. In such lessons I would allow complete freedom to the teacher and the pupil. There would be no compulsory preparation, though of course private reading out of school hours for the love of the subject would be encouraged and guided. (Incidentally time would be saved in the lessons as there would be no obligation to check homework). The form of the lesson would be varied. Sometimes it would be that of a lecture, sometimes that of private reading, or of debate, or of dramatic performance, or of discussion in groups or even by individuals, or of reading aloud. There would be no insistence on memory work (but, being an optimist, I believe that a good deal would be remembered) and since side issues would often be followed up, there would be no insistence on a definite scheme of work, but a good deal of ground would be covered all the same; there might be a system of friendly inspection by members of the staff, but there would be no examinations at the end of the term or of the year to hamper the freedom of teacher and taught and yet it might prove that these "appreciation" lessons would be more influential in the long run and create more enthusiastic students than the thorough but sometimes uninspiring grind at subjects which have been successfully submitted to the test of examinations. Not only the able girls, but the gifted girls would, I think make far more progress in some subjects, if they were taught on these lines, with the wider interests which could be aroused without anxiety as to a formal test. For instance, in the study of a language on "appreciation" lines, I should wish to aim (in a humble way of course) at the ideal of the present Classical School of "Literæ Humaniores"—the awakening of an interest in the language, literature, history and art of the nation whose language was being studied. In order to get a good general survey, as much as possible of the great literature of the country should be read, and consequently much would have to be given in translations, but great passages would be taken in the original in all sorts of ways, and not a few girls would, I believe, feel inspired to pursue their studies further. The teacher, no less than the pupil, could benefit greatly by the freedom,

especially if she were fresh from the University. Her interest would be kept alive, she would have the stimulus of preparing from time to time her lessons in the form of a short finished lecture, which would not only encourage her to keep up her own reading, but also would increase her sense of form which would react on her class in a way calculated to prevent unscholarly work.

To deal next with some difficulties. The scheme, to be satisfactorily carried out would require good reading-room space, in addition to the library which, generally, has to be reserved for the elder girls. Most schools are so crowded just now that it would be impossible to spare an extra room for the purpose. I hazard the following suggestions: In all suitable weather, where there are any grounds, let us transform these in the morning hours into a large and spacious reading-ground. When the weather is unsuitable, let the Hall be used in a similar way.

I am very conscious of the difficulty of the Time Table, and I realise that it would be far easier to adapt it to the new requirements in large schools with parallel forms than in small schools. Still, I think that, even in the latter, it would be possible to economise staff in the "appreciation" lessons by taking two sets together, provided the work were arranged so as not to be repeated in the second year, and it seems to me that the freedom of treatment, which is a fundamental principle of "appreciation" lessons, would admit of this.

There may be some difficulty of the transference of individual girls from one method of study to the other in any given subject. It is, of course, quite inevitable that such transference should be necessary from time to time. Girls at the age of fourteen will not always make a wise choice, or they become so much inspired by their "appreciation" subject that they may wish to take it up as an "efficient" subject—in other words, to work at it so thoroughly and fundamentally that they may be able to offer it for an examination test. Such transference will be difficult to 'provide for,' but it must be made possible. The difficulty arises from two independent causes: (1) Girls wishing to transfer themselves to an "efficient" subject class would need some intensive coaching to bring them up in some respects to the level of the class which they are about to enter; (2) the present inadequate staffing of schools makes it very difficult to provide for such coaching. There are, however, two considerations which may make the obstacle somewhat less insuperable: (1) as a whole, it will be the abler girls who wish to transfer themselves; (2) these girls will have gained much which will stand them in good stead in their new method of work, for example, they should have obtained a wider outlook, a firmer grasp of general conditions, and possibly, especially in the case of a language, a larger vocabulary. At present I can only make one suggestion as a way of disposing of the difficulty: for the first few weeks of the autumn term, when transference would be allowed, intensive coaching should be undertaken by a member of the staff, whose work would be lightened by the adoption of the plan, as far as should be necessary, of the appreciation classes doing a large portion of their work during this period in the form of private reading and of lectures to two divisions at a time. The intensive coaching satisfactorily concluded, the more varied forms of "appreciation" lessons would be regularly introduced, but I think that the above restriction might get over the difficulty for a time, at any rate until secondary schools can be more generously staffed.

I have tried here to state an urgent problem and a possible solution, which will demand no soft options, no less serious work than heretofore; in fact, the education provided should be more thorough and more lasting, more fit to be regarded as a preparation for the whole of life.

The more rational school-life for which I make a plea is one in which the girls will be less hurried, less over-burdened, in which she will have leisure to think and to grow by the adoption of two methods of study, one of which will be very varied in treatment, will make no definite claim on the memory, will require no compulsory preparation, will aim at no examination—a method designed to encourage appreciation, to foster breadth of outlook, to stimulate the girl to love study for its own sake, in short, to produce the attitude of mind which one would expect to find in the genuine "amateur," and which should lead to the "amoroso uso di sapienza," that "loving converse with wisdom," which, according to Dante, is the one true philosophy of life, and which I am sure is "the root, flower, and fruit of a 'liberal education.'"

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FOURTH REPORT ISSUED BY THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE CIVIL SERVICE IN 1914.

Chairman: LORD MACDONNELL.

I.—MAJORITY REPORT.

In the Civil Service the evidence shows that in power of sustained work, in the continuity of service, and in adaptability to varying service conditions, the advantage lies with men.

Certain conditions now differentiate between female from male employment in the Civil Service. An existing rule requires established service to be terminated on marriage, and authorises payment of a gratuity in such cases. Though the Service loses the value of a woman's prior training the majority of us regard it as essential to maintain the existing rule intact, and apart from considerations as to the welfare of the family (and these must not be ignored), believe that the responsibilities of married life are normally incompatible with the devotion of a woman's whole-time and unimpaired energy to the Public Service.

At the present time the general practice of the Service is that the salaries of women should be fixed on a lower scale than those of men of similar or analogous status, and the only exceptions, as far as we are aware, are those of the Women Health Insurance Commissioners and Health Officers. We recommend that, in so far as the character and conditions of the work performed by women in the Civil Service approximate to the work performed by men, the pay of women should approximate to equality with that of men. The evidence which we have received indicates that women's services are (subject to exceptions which in the higher branches are important) less efficient on the whole than those of men. A considerable proportion, for instance, of women civil servants marry and leave the Service before they have reached their full degree of efficiency, and men are, we are told, more likely than women to stand the extra exertion called for at a crisis. In so far as this difference of efficiency exists the salaries of men should, we believe, remain higher than those of women. But the actual differences in salaries do not seem to result from any general consideration of the problem. For instance, we find that highly-qualified women Inspectors receive, in many cases, salaries little more than one half of those paid to men Inspectors of similar grade employed in the same department. We therefore recommend that the Treasury should institute a general inquiry with the object of removing inequalities of salary not based on differences in the efficiency of service.

What then, are the special forms of activity in which the work of women is most likely to be valuable to the Public Service? Foremost in importance and extent are those concerned with the interests of women themselves and of children. The State now deals constantly with questions which have been made the subject of special study by many competent and experienced women. These questions concerned the nurture and education of children, the health and housing of the people, sickness insurance for women, the administration of the Poor Law, industrial conditions and wages, the welfare of women in reformatories, prisons, workhouses, and asylums. In all such cases there is a wide field for the work of women who have trained themselves for these special branches of service.

The presence of women upon the Inspectorates of the Departments of Education, Local Government, and Prisons in the three Kingdoms proves the acceptance by the Government of the principle. But having regard to the very large numbers of the classes whose welfare is concerned we cannot think that the present proportion of female to male officials indicates an adequate appreciation of the service which women are here able to render.

An increasing number of women now annually complete with credit an advanced course of university study, and on this circumstance has been based a proposal that the Government should recruit a not inconsiderable number of these women for the service of the State, more especially for staffs of the Bd. of Educatn., the L.G.B., the La. Dept. of the Bd. of Trade, the N. H. Ins. Com., and the Home Dept. We think that specially-qualified women should be eligible for appointment to particular administrative situations in such departments, and that these appointments should be made under the procedure of Clause 7 of the Order in Council, but we do not recommend the admission of women by competitive examination.

We therefore recommend that the Treasury, acting in communication with the various Heads of Departments, and after consultation with competent women advisers, should institute an inquiry into the situations in each department which might with advantage to the Public Service be filled by qualified women.

II.—MINORITY REPORT.

Signed by Hubert M. Southwark, Kenneth Muir Mackenzie, Cecil Beck, Philip Snowden, Elizabeth Haldane, Lucy Deane Streetfield.

While we recognise the value of many of the recommendations as to women, and the wisdom of not going in advance of public opinion, we think the Report, in fact, lags behind the times. [i.e. 1914.]

We desire to record our dissent from the § "the evidence shows that in power of sustained work, in the continuity of service and in adaptability to varying service conditions the advantage lies with men."

We believe that efficiency in clerical, as in other forms of labour, depends in part upon the food, housing, recreation, &c., made possible by the salary paid. For this reason we think that no fair inference can be drawn as to the efficiency of the two sexes from a comparison between the work of the existing women clerks and that of male clerks enjoying much larger salaries. And we do not think that the evidence before us justifies the statement, even with regard to existing facts, that "in adaptability to varying service conditions the advantage lies with men."

We are unable to agree to a hard and fast regulation of compulsory retirement on marriage. We believe that there are many cases, especially in the higher grade of work or where women are appointed for highly specialised knowledge, in which the enforcement of this rule would act to the public disadvantage.

We hold that the opening of the Class I examination to women, though it may possibly be regarded as inexpedient at the present time, should not be considered to be so in permanency. A limited number of places should, we submit, be assigned to women, and whether they compete separately for these places or along with the men should be a matter for arrangement. Admission by a less normal method might, we think, lead to a misunderstanding on the part of the public.

WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

A COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF RECENT GOVERNMENT REPORTS.

REPORT OF THE MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION, 1919.

Chairman: LORD HALDANE.

Our terms of reference entrust us with the duty of advising "in what manner the exercise and distribution by the Government of its functions should be improved," and we are strongly of opinion that among the changes that should be made as conducive to this end must certainly be included an extension of the range and variety of the duties entrusted to women in the Civil Service and in practically all departments.

The practical question whether women can be found suitable to perform duties comparable with those assigned to men in Class I. has to a large extent found an answer in the experience of the last four years, which has gone far to resolve any doubts upon the point. We understand that in certain Departments women have undertaken duties of the Class I. standard during the greater part of the war period, and have been found to perform these duties to the satisfaction of the Heads of the Departments in which they are employed.

We, therefore, think that it is no longer expedient in the public interest to exclude women on the ground of sex from situations usually entered by the Class I. examination, or from other situations usually entered by competition.

In our opinion there are, apart from those administrative posts for which either a man or a woman of sufficient education and experience may be equally suitable, certain posts, both in the higher division and in other grades, for which women, if properly qualified, are *prima facie* more suitable than men. These posts should, we think, in future be assigned to women, and, as regards other posts, we think that the test of eligibility should have no relation to the question of sex, but should be whether a particular candidate, male or female, is in all respects the one who appears best qualified and most likely to perform efficiently the duties attaching to a particular post.

With regard to the great majority of permanent appointments to the clerical establishment, we do not consider that, whether the Class I., the various Intermediate Classes, or the Second Division, there is any reason for excluding persons of the female sex from entering for any examination whatever the form of the educational tests which may in future be prescribed. We think that it should be open to any Department having posts to be filled to specify with regard to each vacancy whether the circumstances of the post and the duties to be performed are such as to make it undesirable for a woman or a man to be appointed, and we are also of opinion that within each Department promotion to higher posts should be dealt with on the same principles.

The question of the remuneration of women employed in the Civil Service is, we are aware, one of the difficulties that has delayed the adoption of a considered and homogeneous scheme for their employment in the several Departments. On this, as on other points, whilst we are of opinion that no discrimination can properly be enforced merely on the ground of sex, we refrain from offering observations or recommendations, since, to be of any value, these would require the consideration of various highly technical and somewhat controversial questions, not only in the economic sphere, but in many other directions, on many of which there is at present an insufficiency of trustworthy records of experience.

We restrict ourselves here, therefore, to the general statement of our conviction (i) that the absence of any substantial recourse to the services of women in the administrative staffs of Departments, and still more in their Intelligence branches (which we are unanimous in hoping to see set up by an increased number of Departments) has in the past deprived the public service of a vast store of knowledge, experience and fresh ideas, some of which would, for particular purposes, have been far more valuable and relevant than those of even the ablest of the men in the Civil Service; and (ii) that for the effective arrangement and performance of the largely extended duties which we think that women should undertake in the Civil Service, it will be essential that one or more women of special qualifications and experience should regularly be included in responsible posts as part of the staff of that separate branch of the Treasury which we have unanimously suggested should be set up to specialise in "establishment" work, and to study all questions of staff, recruitment, classification, &c., in application to the several Departments of State.

CONCLUSIONS.

Five Government Reports are here presented. They set forth in official language, and in varying degrees of reasonableness, the main difficulties and advantages of the equal employment of men and women in the Civil Service. Some reports emphasise that time has been rather wasted. The same evidence must have been given again and again, the same discussions must have taken place, and the same differences of opinion revealed. But if, in the end, the Civil Service is properly opened, we shall think it has been worth while. If, on the other hand, no result comes of all this, we shall have to look to other methods. Yet another Government Commission will hardly help us much, and if, after them all, we still get only a point blank refusal to admit women on equal terms, we must ourselves offer a point blank refusal to that proposal.

REPORT OF THE WAR CABINET COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN INDUSTRY, 1919.

Chairman: LORD JUSTICE ATKIN.

In the Civil Service the number of women increased in four years from 65,457 in July, 1914, to 222,788 in July, 1918. In the Post Office the number was doubled by an augmentation of 60,500.

In Civil Departments other than the Post Office the number of women rose from 4,600 in July, 1914, to 47,700 in July, 1918; in the Service Departments the number increased in the same time from 300 to 54,000. The women were employed generally as typists and clerks, and in junior administrative posts. The evidence of various bodies representing men and women clerks, or women clerks only, was in the direction of showing that the faults of the clerical woman war-worker, often carelessly selected and allocated to inappropriate duties, were due to want of training and practice, and not to any inherent inequality with male workers.

The conclusion which we have drawn is that in order to maintain the principle of "equal pay for equal work" in cases where it is essential to employ men and women of the same grade of capacity and training, but where equal pay will not attract the same grade it may be necessary for the State to counteract the difference of attractiveness by a payment for the services rendered to the State in connection with the continuance of the race, or, in other words, by the payment of children's allowances to married men. The application of this principle would not be entirely without precedent. . . . We suggest that this subject should receive very careful consideration from His Majesty's Government.

APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLE TO CIVIL SERVICE.

The clerical and administrative branches of the Civil Service formed the subject of a Report of the Royal Commission in 1914 which specifically dealt with the relation between payments made to men and women.

Both these Reports (the Majority and Minority) were in the direction of our recommendation of "equal pay for equal work." We are not aware if the general Treasury inquiry advocated by the majority has, as yet, been undertaken, and can only urge that, if it has not, it should be put in hand with the least possible delay. We think that the closer approximation of equality in pay should be accompanied by the grant of greater equality of opportunity; we recommend the abolition of the special grades for women clerks, and we propose that there should be no separate examination for men and women seeking entrance to the several grades of the Service. We consider, however, that Government Departments should, like private employers, have within their discretion the proportion of women to be employed in any branch or grade.

REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE OF WOMEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION, 1919.

Chairman: MRS. DEANE STREETFIELD.

1. That women who have (a) been temporarily employed in Government Departments during the war, or (b) been employed otherwise than in Government Departments in the work of direct utility to the prosecution of the war, be eligible for selection for permanent posts in the Civil Service, but should be required to appear before a Selection Board on the same footing as candidates from His Majesty's Forces, it being understood that absence of military service must be balanced by positive merit.

2. That women now holding temporary appointments in Government Departments who "have not only proved themselves to be up to or above the standard usually obtained from competitive examinations, but have gained valuable administrative experience in the Departments in which they have served" (Third Interim Report of the Treasury Committee on Recruitment for the Civil Service after the War. Section 4 (2)), should not be prevented from appearing before the Selection Board by the special age restrictions set out in Sections 9 and 23 of that Report.

3. That during the period of reconstruction, either— (a) The special regulation as to war service as a condition of new appointments be not applied to women, and the Selection Board be directed to choose those women who appear likely to make the best officials; (b) If the special regulation be retained, it should be so worded as to allow women to appear before the Selection Board who are otherwise suitable, and who have done service during the war of direct utility to the prosecution of the war.

4. That women be admitted by the same examinations and at the same age as men to the Junior Clerical, Senior Clerical, and Administrative Classes which were recommended by the Royal Commission on the Civil Service. . . .

8. That the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service for the filling of professional and technical posts be applied to women equally with men. Where a woman is a candidate for such a post, the Committee of Selection should include a woman or women.

9. That where the sex or age of the persons under the superintendence of any officer, or in the purview of any Department, makes it essential that a due proportion of officers and inspectors shall be of any one sex, regulations to that effect shall be made, and the necessary revision of staff shall be undertaken.

10. That in Departments where women are employed, there shall be a woman Establishment Officer, and women shall be appointed to all Committees charged with the selection of candidates, where some of the candidates are women.

11. That one of the Civil Service Commissioners shall be a woman.

12. That a woman be appointed in the section of the Treasury proposed by the Royal Commission for the supervision and control of the Civil Service.

13. That throughout the Service women shall receive equal opportunities of promotion with men, and equal rates of pay.

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## Imagination and the New Needlecraft.

The cultivation of beauty is an essential part of a progressive educational system and if, as we hope, we are going to make equal opportunity for learning one of our national reforms, we must see that the latent love of beauty, which all children should possess, is not stunted by unfavourable influences.

As far as we can gather every child is born with a sense of the beautiful. The smallest baby will stretch out its hand to seize a flower. Little children chase the sunbeams that flash across the garden walls. If a child is to have a happy outlook upon life, this love of beauty must be fostered and tended even as the most delicate plant. External influences and environment have much to do with the formation of character, and if we would have our children become worthy citizens we must see that their outlook is not limited and their minds are not filled with impressions that are detrimental to the growth of their imagination.

"Give us a child till he is seven," said the old Jesuit fathers, "and we will make or mar him." Since early impressions are vivid and have so much influence upon the character, children should be given the opportunity of developing along the right lines, not necessarily in a special groove, for this would limit their scope, but along those lines which they are able to select for themselves, their choice being determined through the full use of their imagination and the influences to which it has been subjected.

"Imagination," says Miss Margaret MacMillan in her preface to *The New Needlecraft*, "is the original power of man, woman, or child, and it plays the same part in mental life as Will plays in the moral nature." We each see the world in our own way and arrange our memories and impressions accordingly. If these memories and impressions are coloured by ugly surroundings and sordid conditions, our imaginations become diseased and this morbidity is reflected in our lives and our work, so that the nation suffers.

It should not be difficult to stimulate children's imagination by bringing beauty into their lives and making it an essential part of their education. And yet the road to this goal is an uphill one beset with obstacles. In the first place, there are the housing conditions to consider. One can take children to crèches where everything is spotlessly clean; one can put them into nursery schools with rooms simply furnished and sunny, or into baby camps where they live out of doors and enjoy the green grass and pure air. But these influences cannot attain their object when the children return, after school—or crèche—hours, to overcrowded tenements. Secondly, there is the difficulty of finding cheap but pretty clothing. Nearly all children, particularly girls, take an interest in what they have to wear. This is not mere vanity, but their sense of the beautiful manifesting itself. This characteristic should be encouraged and not mocked. If you laugh at a child's desire to choose her own colours and dress in her own way, you put a check on the growth of her imagination and make her diffident, so that later she will choose only what she sees other people are wearing, because she thinks that her individual taste is of no account. "I believe," said our great poet craftsman, "that there are simple people who think they are dull to art and who are really only perplexed and wearied by finery and rubbish." There is much of this finery in dress, and it is not only unlovely but useless. Machine-made garments that come within the scope of the poor mother's purse are shoddy and unserviceable. The trimming which is meant to beautify them is tawdry and apt to tear. The inevitable consequence is that innumerable members of our community are clothed in rags.

Now, rags must go. There can be no two opinions about this. Their place must be taken by strong materials in all sorts of shades, sold at popular prices, so that the poorest housewife can make herself, her home, and her children beautiful.

Miss Margaret MacMillan and Mrs. Glaisier Foster, promoters of the Educraft Association (307, Evelyn-street, Deptford), have gone far towards solving the problem of the rag. They are not believers in clothing by charity, for they understand the desire of the poorest mother to manage her own affairs and to provide for her own family. They hold, however, that it could be made possible for every woman and child to be well and artistically dressed, in spite of poverty, and they have set themselves the task of showing how this can be done.

Their little showroom is a medley of gay colours, for, as Miss MacMillan says, "the Association is not an æsthetic school with a taste for greeny yellows. Buttercup gold and sky-blue, the pink as we find it on the brier-rose, the scarlet

of the poppies in the field and broken colours that are lovely we will use. But we are going to be in the fashion, too. No one shall say of our children—'How queer they look.' They will not be dressed as freaks or oddities. In the poorest districts the people like to be in the fashion. It is cruel to make children look dowdy or queer. The poorest resent it. The object of the movement is to put an end to rags and not only to rags, but to dress ugliness of all kinds." And so the shop window is gay with tunics and cloaks, little coloured frocks and brightly embroidered blouses, which show that needlecraft still has a place in the world of Art and that those whose lot has been cast in unlovely surroundings can still bring beauty into their lives.

Five years ago Britain had to turn millions of men into khaki within a few weeks. Quickly and quietly this was done. It ought not to be difficult to clothe millions of women and children, most of whom can, themselves, do the stitchery and cutting-out. The Educraft Association teaches the children how to work for themselves and how to express their own thoughts upon the material which they are embroidering, so that, besides making something useful, which is in itself an education, they train and keep alive that energy which makes one human soul distinct from another.

It is memories and impressions that strengthen the imagination, and so the children are given beautiful colours with which to work. They are not set to making tiny white stitches on a white background, for that both strains their eyes and stunts their imagination. They are given coloured threads and bright material; material that is stout and serviceable like Sundour or wincey, but beautiful in colour and suited to fine treatment in stitchery just as the more expensive articles. Some of us may remember our own childhood when we hemmed and felled and gathered, making our stitches as tiny as possible, using white cotton on a white background, black on a black one, and so forth, till we sometimes wept for sheer boredom and hated our sewing to such an extent that it was given us as a punishment. Thus one of the gentlest arts became a schoolroom bogey instead of a thing of beauty.

The Educraft Association is burning this bogey. Their science of the needle gives free play to the creative faculties. Why should a hem be plain? Is there any reason for using white thread upon a white material when a coloured cotton would serve the double purpose of making and decorating the garment? Why should a little girl sew an uninteresting seam in black when she can make it a work of art by blending her coloured threads? Surely the latter has greater educational value, for it teaches her to combine the beautiful with the useful, and, instead of straining her eyes, develops her power of observation.

This new needlecraft, which could open the door of beauty to all the world, is done without rule or compass, nor is there a need for special skill in designing. The drawing of tiny straight lines and a simple natural measurement, involved in the stitching process, guides the needle, which creates its own lovely and surprising forms. There is no mysterious secret. Anyone can master the system. Children are already learning it. Even the five-year-old is filled with excitement and joy at the work which his own tiny hands can produce.

It is surely a happy omen that the new needlecraft begins in the nursery. Children are full of illusive ideas, and little intuitive, wandering desires. Their imagination develops and their sense of colour is strengthened under the Educraft system of sewing. The simplicity of the materials, the natural process of designing, and the brightness of the threads which they use, open a vision of artistic happiness to those who are working, and fill them with the hope and wonder of a discoverer, for they do not know what their lines will trace, but they do know that if they persevere and keep their stitches true, something beautiful will be evolved.

The power to create beauty is a gift, which is bound in some subtle way to man's inner life. Its development depends upon the atmosphere in which it is conceived. Education can ripen or kill it. We know that man is a beauty-lover, that he is, by nature, experimental and independent. We can see these characteristics in small children whose cry, on seeing something new, is always—"Let me do it. Let me try." We know, too, that children respond very quickly to suggestion. If we realise these things we should surely follow the pioneers' lead and educate our children through their imagination, so that they may, one day, open their eyes to a world where beauty is within reach of all, and where rags and tatters are unknown.