

upon these being unscrewed, a passage into the drain was exposed, and that from these places a brush upon a rod could be passed into the drains, which would clear them from end to end; that they were, in fact, swept just as a chimney is swept. The general idea of a drain from ordinary experience is a large and ill-smelling passage, which has to be found by digging up the ground haphazard in various directions until it is met with. Messrs. Fletcher and Phillipson's (of Dublin, drainage contractors) patent accessible drains are the very reverse in every respect; they are small smooth channels, perfectly clean and free from smell, which can be opened and examined from end to end in a few minutes. The soil pipes of the w.c. are all so arranged that there is a constant current of air flowing through them. The bath and lavatory pipes are so fixed that they have no connection with the drains, and therefore cannot become the means of letting foul air into the house, as is unfortunately a common case in many places."

THIS system of drainage is decidedly a huge step in the right direction, and I most cordially hope that it will be freely made use of. S. G.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK.

LADIES AND PLAN TRACING.

PLAN tracing is purely technical, but it requires a delicate touch and great nicety of work. It used mostly to be undertaken by architects' pupils, but a few years ago the Ladies' Tracing Office was opened at 8, Great Anne Street, Westminster, where several ladies are now employed in drawing out plans, &c. "Knowledge of design is not," so the principal, Miss Long, informed me, "needed for the work"; and I must own I was a little surprised at this answer to my question. As no particular training (that bugbear of ladies who are not so very young and desire to earn their living) is required, therefore such work is, of course, naturally sought by many, the result being that the workman's dread placards proclaiming "No hands needed" are here substituted by the words, so often heard nowadays—words oftentimes the death knell of hope—"No opening in this office." What matters it if the applicant be strong or weak, worthy or unworthy, if the door cannot be open to hear the claims made, if the work can in no wise be had, or the money often so sorely needed be earned? This work was really started to help poor ladies to earn their own living. Now the office has been taken, the plan tracers sit busy and eager at their

work. These few have found remunerative occupation, and yet the crowd of applicants who have "no work to do" increases still daily, as month by month, year by year, the battle waxes harder still, and day by day "to earn one's bread" is more commonly used in conjunction with the subjunctive instead of the future tense. The result, by rule of three, being—underselling. The work at the Ladies' Tracing Office is fairly well paid—rather more than the average lady "working bee" gains, who, alas! obtains generally very little honey (or change the first letter, and write money) for many hours' hard work, seldom indeed so charming as culling the sweetness from the fragrant flowers must be, for the summer of life is short and fleeting and the winter time long. But there is one way of opening the doors of this office to many a poor sister who now hears sorrowfully the sad tidings, "no openings." How can there be workers unless there be work for them to do? If these pages catch the eye of any wealthy sister who needs plan tracing done, either directly or indirectly through builder or architect, husband or friend, let her remember the Ladies' Tracing Office, where fellow-women are eking out an existence—more, a fairly comfortable living—by the help of the little tracing-pen. For this office is not a thing of centuries; its date is within memory of man; it is essentially of this year of grace 1890, when "men must work and woman must" *work* also, as well as weep. It was started by that noble society, the Society for Promoting Employment of Women, not a decade ago, and it is not by any means as well known as it might and ought to be. The principal undertakes any work sent, and sees it is done carefully and well.

WRITING of plans and plan tracing reminds me that, though we have now a lady representative for most arts and trades, and the names of lady artists, doctors, decorators, dentists, clerks, photographers, lecturers (public as well as private), sculptors, &c., may be cited as examples of what women can and are doing, yet no lady architect has arisen, or, if so, I have not heard of her. Certainly it was a lady who planned the new gardens of Battersea Park, but then our gardens are not our houses; there is just a little difference. Maybe it is that the trade is "not good enough," as Americans and others say. Still I cannot help thinking a good lady architect would make enough per annum to satisfy her as to the wisdom of having spent years and money on mastering the principles of architecture.

TALKING of women learning trades, it has been mooted in the papers that young ladies might

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