

of the sick—than our American sisters as a rule have yet become; although, even in this, I must in justice confess that under the most excellent superintendence of Miss Isabel Hampton, the Nursing at the Johns Hopkins Hospital at Baltimore leaves very little room for improvement, either in theory or in practice.

It may interest you to know something regarding the purpose and scope of the exhibits to be placed in the general buildings of the Exposition, and also of those in the Women's Building, and I will, therefore, quote somewhat freely from the official documents on these subjects.

The Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, and the Cotton Centennial in New Orleans, were greatly aided by the participation of able committees of women, which created what they termed the "Woman's Department," wherein was installed a collective exhibit of all the interesting and meritorious work by women that could be brought together. This Woman's Department proved so useful and attractive that the co-operation of women in exposition work was recognised as a valuable addition, and in consequence, the original Act of Congress providing for the celebration of the quadro-centennial, created an official organization known as "The Board of Lady Managers." When this board first assembled to organise its work for the Columbian Exposition, it was found that, though the previous work had been most effective, the impelling law of progress demanded a different plan of action for the coming Exposition. Established precedent had to be thrown aside, and new methods of usefulness created. This proved to be necessary because of the strong sentiment among those most interested, against taking the exhibits of women from the general buildings and placing them apart in a "Woman's Department." Women who are doing the most creditable work in the arts and industries strenuously opposed such a separation, and insisted that their exhibits should be so placed as to compete with the best and most successful productions in all departments of classified exhibits without regard to sex distinction. As in some classes of work women are not credited with having arrived at a degree of excellence equal to that of men, a competition among women only would result in the award of premiums to articles which would not necessarily have been successful, if entered in a general competition. In an international competitive exhibition, the object is to honour the highest grade of work only, and thereby give it an international reputation, and added commercial value. This intention might, therefore, be

entirely defeated, in case of a competition restricted to women only.

It was thus found that not only would the best of women's work be withheld from a "Woman's Department," but the loss in amount would be equally disastrous. A moment's consideration of the facts shows that a vast proportion of the labour of the world is performed by men and women in conjunction, whose work is consequently indistinguishably blended in the finished product. We could not, if we would, separate the warp from the woof of the fabric over which men and women have toiled side by side. To exhibit what women accomplish alone would result in so meagre and unjust a representation of their usefulness as to do them great discredit. The first important decision, therefore, of the Board of Lady Managers, was against having a "Woman's Department" to contain a separate exhibit of the work of women.

This Board, having been created by the general Government, and given by Congress, the National Commission, and the Directory unusual powers and duties, felt impelled, because of these enlarged opportunities, to undertake a plan of work correspondingly broad. By the various enactments of these bodies, the Lady Managers were made co-ordinate officers with the Commission in every department of the Exposition. To the Board, all applications by women are to be made for space for exhibits, buildings, &c. They were given the appointment of Members of the Jury of Awards, and, in general, entire charge of the interests of women in connection with the Exposition as well as the absolute control of the Woman's Building.

One of the cherished ideals of the Board is to remove the present erroneous and injurious impression that women are doing little skilled labour, or little steady and valuable work, and that they, consequently, are not to be taken seriously into consideration when dealing with industrial problems; that they never learn to do anything thoroughly well, and that, therefore, the small compensation given them is a just and proper equivalent for their services, because it has no abstract commercial value. An effort will be made to demonstrate that their labour is a fixed and permanent element, and an important factor in the industrial world, and must be carefully studied in its relations to the general whole. Upon a strong presentation of the facts, it is hoped that a healthy public sentiment may be created which will condemn the disproportionate wages paid men and women for equal services. The Board particularly wishes to call attention to the necessity of providing technical training to fit

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