

handy, and which will make them readier in future in learning a trade.* I will only mention one other point in which sloyd bears good moral fruit. It implants in the child a sense of satisfaction in honest work begun, carried on, and completed by fair means, and by his own exertions. In these days of scamped work, of dishonest tricks to be found in all trades and manufactures, what can we say too much in praise of a system which will give our boys and girls a sense of the dignity of work—a scorn and contempt for what is slovenly or tricky? The sloyd system is completely opposed to the modern principle of division of labour, which is no doubt a necessity in the present conditions of life, but which would be disastrous in education, where the aim must be the development of each individual, not the getting through a given quantity of work in the shortest and cheapest way. I feel sure that a boy or girl who, at a period when impressions are most lasting, has had the solid satisfaction of carrying out a piece of work from beginning to end, will not be satisfied in adult life with becoming a mere machine for drilling holes, putting on pins' heads, or turning out chair-legs by the hundred, but will, in his leisure hours, vindicate his dignity and skill by doing some work, whether practical or intellectual, worthy of a human being. We must remember, too, that a large part of the distress in bad times is due to the fact that, if the particular fragment of work which a person is capable of is taken from him, he can do nothing else whereby to earn his bread. A man who has had the benefit of sloyd-training is full of resources and can with comparative ease apply himself to new work.

There can be no doubt that there is a real need for some such practical training as is given by sloyd. I wish I could transport my readers to the Swedish schools, so that they might see for themselves the earnestness and energy of the young workers, the dexterity with which they handle their tools, their extreme carefulness (for no damaged or careless work is passed), and the independent manner in which they work. We want something of the kind, suited to our national needs and character, and bearing the same fruit of trained intelligence and skill which sloyd is producing in the countries where it is practised. A great deal is being done in England for technical education, and a great deal is said as to its need, for there is a very real danger of English workmen being driven out of the field on account of the superior skill of foreigners and the great advantages they enjoy in the way of technical training. We can but rejoice that we are beginning to recognise this danger, and that so much attention is being directed to the need of technical education; but, even supposing the country were covered with technical schools, if our young people come to them with eyes and hands untrained, with little or no sense of form and beauty, with lack of perception and the habit of observation, how can they possibly hold their own against the youth of other countries, coming fresh from schools where eye and hand have been trained to general dexterity which will stand them in good stead whatever work they may take up, with trained observation and perception, and with a love for work and an interest in it which has been quickened and stimulated by many a victory gained by attention, perseverance, and energy? Sloyd, then, is the best preparation for technical education.

Should this sloyd-instruction be given to girls as well as boys? This question has already been answered practically in the affirmative in Sweden, and with excellent results. It is just as important for a woman as for a man to have the complete use of her hands. It may be said that girls have needlework, which is more suited to their sex and more useful to them in after-life. It would be a very sorry thing for our future wives and mothers not to learn the use of their needle; but why should they not learn needlework and sloyd too? The use of the tools would develop their muscles, and they would acquire a dexterity which needlework alone cannot give. And, besides this general development, which is of paramount importance, the positive knowledge gained would be of the greatest service to them when they grow up. Another consideration, not to be overlooked, is that a practical knowledge of sloyd would give them a growing experience of and sympathy with men's work. But, it will be objected, even granted that a universal hand-education should be given, including both sexes, and granted that teachers are forthcoming who are capable of giving it, how is it possible to spare time for another subject? I will only reply that the schools in Scandinavia are among the best in Europe, and yet they find time for it. For the girls of our higher schools it seems to me even more important than for their sisters of the working-classes. The latter have to help their mothers at home in many active ways, and get, at all events, plenty of movement and variety of occupation; but the former, who have not so many active games as their brothers, and who are often unable to be much out of doors in bad or severe weather, are lamentably in want of some interesting active work as a counterpoise to the continual sitting and poring over books and exercises. Sloyd of some sort is the very thing they need. I am persuaded that, if only we set our shoulder to the wheel, we shall find in this hand-education the true remedy for over-pressure of brain, which is not an invention of the doctors.

A small beginning has been made within the last year—which promises to shortly open out considerably—in introducing sloyd into this country. During the summer of 1886 I went to study it practically and theoretically at the Nääs Sloyd Seminary for Teachers near Gothenburg, with two friends, one of whom has contributed some valuable papers on the subject to the *Fortnightly* and *Saturday Reviews*. The other has only been able to work for the cause indirectly, as she is the headmistress of a large public school. While I was at Nääs, towards the end of the course, the directress, Miss Nyström, a very gifted teacher and sloydist, broke down completely in health, and, after trying in vain to see what a short rest would do for her, had to resign her post. Her doctors recommended her to leave Sweden for a time, so as to have an entire change of air, scene, and surroundings, and she accompanied me on my return to England last November. During the whole winter and spring she was too much out of health to undertake any active work, but we were not entirely idle. Soon after our arrival I gave a lecture before the Brighton Branch of the Teachers' Guild, which excited great interest, and I am happy to say that in some cases, at all

* In choosing apprentices masters always give the preference to those boys who have gone through the sloyd course, and this fact no doubt contributes greatly to the high esteem with which sloyd is regarded by the working-classes.