



The Lady's Own Paper.

EDITED BY MRS. ALGERNON KINGSFORD.

No. 307.—Vol. X.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1872.

[PRICE THREEPENCE.]

ADDRESS.

In issuing this First Number of our New Series we do not profess so much to supply an already acknowledged want, as to inaugurate a new combination of ideas.

Advocates of progress and reform in politics, education, and social manners, are apt, in their zeal for the serious and useful, to ignore the æsthetic; and by the vehemence of their crusade against frivolity, have, in the minds of many among the conservative party, identified the ethics of the liberal school with Vandalism and insensibility. There has lately come into the world of women a vast and wide-spread reaction, which, like most revulsions of thought, whether national or individual, is disposed to be extreme and intolerant. Some years ago we were exclusively domestic; now we are inclined to be exclusively politic. Once we were all for the feminine monopolies of the *Bona Dea*; now we will have nothing but *Minerva* and her maulike paraphernalia. This is a state of affairs which is doing a good cause great harm outside the charmed circle of the Amazonian camp. Home-keeping wives and women of idealistic tendencies imagine us to be a hard unlovely crew, with no interests beyond polling-booths and school-boards, contemners of art and taste, barbarous, implacable Gorgons, in whose vicinity no fair or graceful thing can endure, but whose very aspect freezes into stone all living forms of that heaven-given beauty which ought to be "a joy for ever."

The Editor of this Journal feels, therefore, that time is ripe for the establishment of a new and æsthetic school among "political women,"—a school which shall aim at uniting the worship of the Graces with the pursuit of liberty, the members of which, while claiming and asserting their rightful dignity and individual freedom, shall, none the less, uphold and preserve the distinctive charm and gentleness of true womanhood.

And in this sense it is hoped that our retention of the title by which this Journal has been already known for six years, may not be unsuggestive. "Lady" is a term which has suffered more grossly in the way of misapplication than its masculine equivalent

—"lord;" the false and degraded chivalry of modern days having made it a common term of address for all women above the rank of vassalage. Nevertheless, there exist some exquisitely lovely and thoughtful verses of Wordsworth's, which may furnish us with a fair excuse for our heading, and serve to remind us what sweetness and refinement of mind, what tenderness of heart, what purity of soul are expected of those among us who bear that honourable and significant Saxon title of "lady":—

"Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said—'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A LADY of mine own."

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse; and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain."

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That, wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things."

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy."