

The Woman Worker

Edited by Mary R. Macarthur.

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CONTENTS.

UGHT WOMEN TO TELL?

By JULIA DAWSON.

THREEPENCE A DAY.

By Keighley Snowden.

There is nothing in either politics or journalism to amuse one like people. My belief is that politics and journalism are both vastly more amusing than they used to be, for the mere reason that you see more people in them, and see them closer. No two alike, and all more or less alive. It's wonderful.

Democracy means just that. Democracy is a great and healthy entertainment. Aristocracy was a mean and deadly farce.

The funniest thing about democrats is that some of them do not allow for the differences in people. For me, as a looker-on, that memorable and altogether heartsome evening with the Pioneers was so full of interest in such differences that I shall never have done thinking it over. But here is one thing that happened to me.

A young lady of remarkable charm and spirit, whose name I did not catch—there's the pity!—spent nearly twenty minutes trying to persuade me that nothing ought to be printed in her dear WOMAN WORKER that could offend new readers to whom she introduced it. She clearly saw how desirable this was. It is even more desirable, you may think, that nobody should take offence at opinions not their own in THE WOMAN WORKER. But the young lady could not guarantee that. How could she?

However, THE WOMAN WORKER is a democratic paper, and exults in an infinite variety that cannot stale.

She was annoyed with Bessie Smallman, and I said, "Why not write and say so?" Which is what somebody did, of course—with the excellent result, as it seems to me, that 28,000 readers had much to think about.

"A. E. H." writes from Ilford to say how much she regrets the fuss made by some people over the Unknown Heroine discovered by a nurse on holiday. Here is a woman who says she has lived on threepence a day for five years, and who, nevertheless, has beautiful eyes and splendid health and courage. How in the world did she get into a Socialist paper? The "Daily Mail" is the proper place for such enormities.

Both "A. E. H." and some of the staff—not to mention distinguished people—doubt the Unknown Heroine's estimate severely. On threepence a day, they say, you cannot subsist, let alone live; and if you could it would be quite undesirable.

Well, the Unknown Heroine has made herself known to all who care to write for her name and address, and she is now engaged with them. I can only hope that very few of her many correspondents are obliged to exist, if possible, so cheaply. It is not only undesirable, but just as

shameful as if the Unknown Heroine's eyes were sad and her health and spirit gone.

But why is the "Daily Mail" the proper place for her? I myself do not think it a proper place for anybody. It is a place where nobody and nothing means anything whatever, as far as I can see.

THE WOMAN WORKER does mean something; and so does everybody who writes in it. So does every word that appears in it, whether from living or dead writers, poets, or matter-of-fact puzzlers, or humorists. And in THE WOMAN WORKER this "Unknown Heroine," with her self-denials for the support of three households, her lonely courage and her well-kept health, was just a shining proof of the fact that this mad competitive system of ours, being no system at all, is not only unjust alike to the weak and the strong, but amounts, indeed, to an unconscious conspiracy against the very fittest.

In the "Daily Mail," she might have seemed to vindicate the system—which has given us that wonderful ha'penny paper.

But certainly we do not pretend to be more aristocratic and narrow than any paper whatever!

You are encouraged to say what you think here. Can you read Julia Dawson and doubt it? Can you look at the correspondence page and doubt it? Can you observe the catholicity of the literary extracts and the verse and doubt it? It is no use complaining to the Editor. Besides, she has enough to think about.

If there is anything in the paper that you do not like, write what you like. Expound yourselves. Within the modest space at our disposal, you will be printed—according always as you may be interesting, wise, or funny.

This is democracy in journalism.

LOVE WANTING.

Wanting is—what?
Summer redundant,
Blueness abundant,
Where is the blot?

Beamly the world, yet a blank all the same,
Framework that waits for a picture to frame.

What of the leafage, what of the flower?
Roses embowering with nought they embower!

Come, then, complete incompleteness,
O corner,
Pant through the blueness, perfect the summer!

Breathe but one breath,
Rose beauty above,
And all that was death,
Grows life, grows love,
Grows love!

ROBERT BROWNING.

The Last Word	THE EDITOR
Suffragists in Prison	ELIZABETH SLOAN CHESSON
The Promised Land Society	J. J. MALLON
Women in Politics	MARGARET BONDFIELD
Threepence a Day	KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN
A Bard at the Braes	MARGARET McMILLAN
Furniture and Patience	MARIA REDRING
Pensions Act Difficulties	EDWARD R. PEASE
About Witches— <i>A Book of the Hour</i>	KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN
Story Sketch—"Dialogue with a Daughter"	A. NEIL LYONS
Serial Story—"Barbara West"	KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN
Home Notes— <i>Sensible Houses</i>	DOROTHY WORRALL
The Children's Page— <i>About Letters</i>	PEG
Prize Page— <i>Ideal Schools.</i>	
Employment Bureau— <i>The Woman Journalist</i>	PANDORA
Complaints and the Law	PORTIA
Talks with the Doctor	Dr. X.Y.Z.
Readings—	
<i>A Politician's Daughter</i>	CHURCHILL
<i>Possession</i>	GRAHAM TRAVERS
<i>The Good Time Coming</i>	William Morris
<i>An Old-World Heroine</i>	George Eliot
Verse—	
<i>Friendship</i>	ETHEL CARNIE
<i>Love Wanting</i>	Robert Browning
<i>The Disappointed</i>	Ella Wheeler Wilcox
<i>Meg Merrilees</i>	Keats
Women's Labour League	Mrs. J. R. MacDONALD
Correspondence.— <i>The Servant Problem;</i> <i>Teachers' Chances.</i>	
News of the Week.— <i>The Anti-Suffragists; The</i> <i>Rule of the Peers; The Labour Party and</i> <i>its Representatives.</i>	
Attractive Advertisements.	

PROCEEDINGS OF THE Promised Land Society.

Special "Woman Worker" Report.

The fourth meeting of the Promised Land Society was held, by invitation, at the Common Council in the London Guildhall on Monday last.

In opening the proceedings the Lord Mayor said the Hebraic peoples had been excluded from many lands, but in England, where freedom was the very breath of their nostrils, they gladly welcomed anyone, whatever his nationality, out of whom they could turn an honest penny. The English democracy had always loved the Jews for their gift of the Bible, and now that Lord Rothschild had destroyed the Licensing Bill they would love them even better for their beer.

Not Rothschild's Kith.

Announcing that he had a pleasant surprise for them, the Lord Mayor was continuing his remarks in Hebrew when the Secretary pointed out that they were not a Jewish organisation.

It transpired that the Common Council had been misled by the name of the Society, and the Lord Mayor retired in some confusion.

At the instance of Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, who said she could not much longer bear the deprivation of her right to vote for him, and of Miss Maloney, who contended that her bell-ringing at Dundee was the act of a friend who did not wish the electors to catch the silly things he was saying, Mr. Winston Churchill was elected to the chair.

In thanking the meeting, the Chairman said he had been deeply impressed by the clear reasoning of Miss Pankhurst, and he could assure her that her little speech had put the Suffrage movement forward by at least three centuries. As the last demonstration had put it back 200 years, there was a clear gain of a century.

When next they decided to rush the House they could count upon his doing something sensational in the rear.

The Secretary then read greetings from the Anti-Clothing League, the Seekers after Light, and the Society for the Suppression of Human Nature.

The Season's Novelties.

He urged secretaries to make propaganda arrangements without loss of time, and said the Hyndman-Blatchford-Grayson combination, which had added several new turns, was especially good business.

On the other hand, a curtain-raiser, entitled "The One Socialist Party," in which all the best-known performers were to have had parts, had been interdicted by the police as dangerous.

The Chairman then called upon Miss Bondfield to read her eloquent paper on "The Place of Women in the Promised Land."

Miss Bondfield said that capitalistic civilisation admittedly kept men on pins, but it kept women *in* pins. Quoting from "Statistics for Everybody," Miss Bondfield said no woman shop assistants could now get a situation without curly hair; and Sir Robert Giffen had calculated that each of them spent on an average ten days per annum in the operation of curling.

In the case of those using tongs there was a serious destruction of hair.

This instance, said Miss Bondfield, would illustrate the whole position for them.

Some Economics.

In the pure atmosphere of the Promised Land curls would come naturally, the time of the women would not be wasted, and the hair saved from the destructive tongs would suffice to stuff cushions for the whole of the nation.

There would, the speaker added, be other benefits. Women at present remained too much indoors.

As in the Promised Land most of the houses would be used as committee rooms and polling stations, women would consequently be forced to clear out, and so get knowledge of the larger life.

Miss Bondfield admitted they might also get pneumonia, but said if they were to become heroic and beautiful like men they must pay the price.

In the middle of a glowing passage in which Miss Bondfield was urging women to listen to the Trumpets of the Dawn, a bugler started to play "Home, Sweet Home" outside an adjacent public-house. The event created a profound sensation, Mrs. Glasier and other ladies sobbing audibly.

Miss Marris (of the Tariff Reform League) said she was not insensible to the call of the home or of the ballot-box, but, speaking with every reverence, she felt that women had an even holier call.

Patriot Women.

Unless she mistook her sex, the place of women in the Promised Land would be at the docks and railway stations, whence they could hurl back upon the foreigner the hams and foodstuffs with which he sought the ruin of their beloved country.

These people, she said, were dumping more and more of their accursed viands upon our helpless population, and it was the overworked women of England who had to assist to pay the bill.

That was why so many of them were out of employment!

Miss Marris said she had not been able to make this seem as clear as she had hoped, but a woman knew by her feelings when a thing was wrong.

Miss Marris here, quite unaccountably, burst into tears, and thereupon left the meeting.

Miss Eva Gore Booth said it was clear to her that if women had any place in the Promised Land it would be in the coal pits. A Promised Land with women debarred from its pits was a contradiction in terms. She warned the Society that until the banner of women had been lost in the bowels of the earth they would not esteem themselves free.

Dotty!

At this stage an old gentleman who said he had been in a remote part of the world for many years, and was, doubtless, a little out of touch with modern developments, rose to express the hope

that there were still a few people in England who believed that woman's place was the home, and that the hand that rocked the cradle ruled the world.

These remarks produced mingled resentment and merriment, amidst which the old gentleman began to urge that women's sphere did not include politics.

The general amazement at this remark was ended by the arrival of the keeper of the old gentleman, who had escaped from a neighbouring asylum.

The meeting was continuing when we went to press.

MEG MERRILEES.

Old Meg she was a Gipsy,
And lived upon the moors;
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.

Her brothers were the craggy hills,
Her sisters larchen trees—
Alone with her great family
She lived as she did please.

No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon,
And 'stead of supper she would stare
Full hard against the moon.

And every morn of woodbine fresh
She made her garlanding,
And every night the dark glen yew
She wove, and she would sing.

And with her fingers old and brown
She plaited mats o' rushes,
And gave them to the cottagers
She met among the bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen
And tall as Amazon;
An old red blanket cloak she wore,
A chip hat she had on.
God rest her aged bones somewhere,
She died full long ago.

JOHN KEATS.

THE ENGLISH & AMERICAN CHILD.

"The first thing that struck me about American family life was the constant presence of children with their parents," says Lady Henry Somerset in an article in the "Windsor Magazine." "I congratulated myself that this American habit was gaining in our country. But the society of adults is good only in so far as they dare not disturb the child's point of view, that their focus of vision is a different one, and that to adjust life for child eyes as it suits their own is to distort it hopelessly."

The American boy is not taught from his earliest years to accept his sisters' sacrifices with kind and indulgent complacency. The certainty of his male superiority is not fostered. In later life he attends lectures given by women, and in his educational career he owes some of his success in college to their wisdom and brains. All this has a very distinct influence in the formation of a character which from earliest childhood is taught to regard woman with respect and admiration. From babyhood the English boy believes himself superior to his little sisters, and this idea does not diminish with the years."

THE CAUSERIE.

By Julia Dawson.

A Woman with a Past.

By the blue eyes of our beloved Dangle, but I am happy. One woman has asked me to put her out of her misery, and I can! She is kind enough to say she has found in this "Causerie" something her soul has craved for twenty-five years, though for nine of these she has read the "Clarion."

So now, my comrades of the "Clarion" Staff, go to! THE WOMAN WORKER has arrived!

My correspondent's problem is, she has a past; and ought she to tell her daughter? She and her daughter worked hard with the Daisy Lord Petition. And she is more afraid of her daughter finding out her mother's "wrong" than of going wrong herself. This past "wrong" is a constant anxiety and care. She has been married happily eighteen years, and there would be no cloud on her horizon but for that. Ought she to tell? Should she make a clean breast of it at once and so end her misery?

End her misery? Poor little soul. That would be the very way to begin it. At present she has no real misery, but only a fancied one. If she told, even if her husband and daughter are angels with seven pairs of wings each, her life would be saddened for all time.

The "all" she has told me. For obvious reasons I cannot repeat it, and have consigned the letter to the flames, though it bore no name or address, but only the pathetic signature "Anxiety." My advice is that she should let the dead past bury its dead—and, be merry.

By the beard of O'Suthers—which its colour is chestnut brown—she who can be merry and will not in this world of sorrow ought to be whipped.

Bless her dear heart, every man and woman alive has secrets,

Pleasant and Unpleasant.

Only the half-alive and the dead have them not. And I have yet to learn that the soul of any one of us is for sale, or that our heart is so cheap that it must be exposed in a shop window.

There is no reasonable reason whatsoever why any of us should unfold our lives, bleak and bare, to others. They are, at least, our own responsibilities, and if we do not take care of them we suffer.

Nor should we, as "Anxiety" seems to do, nourish and cherish a secret soul-burden that has really long ago been borne to the far end of its journey. To do so is to lose our good name, our good looks, and all good in life.

Each day's burden is enough; sometimes too much; and life is, alas! short. If we women are to fulfil our mission, therefore, we must get all the good out of life that we can, and bury the bad deep, deep down. And we must radiate that good. Be and feel so full of it that everybody gains good by having us as friends and companions. Sweetness and strength should radiate from women as the sun's rays gild the earth. But we can neither be sweet nor strong if we cherish snakes in our bosom in the form of "secrets" which want to be told. Let them lie there. Whatever they are they have had

their day, and helped to mould us for good or ill. The worst sometimes resulting in the best. No woman worth her salt is without a secret of some sort. And who is anybody that he or she should judge another?

Let each heart know its own bitterness, and keep it; also its own sweetness. Above all, let no woman go roaming about the world with no hidden sanctuary in her soul to which she alone may light an occasional candle.

Rest content, "Anxiety." You are no worse than anybody else.

Need Mothers Suffer?

Another writes in a fine hand, with a crow-quill. She winces at pain, even as I do, and recalls that once in the "Clarion" I quoted from a letter written by a woman that during the bearing and birth of several children she had suffered no real pain, and had only endured what might be called temporary inconvenience, and she gave her mode of life.

I remember the letter well, and wished at the time that we had some real woman's paper in which we could discuss such things. Well, we have a woman's paper now—and I think I should have the Editor's permission to discuss such a vital subject as this. Meantime, if the woman who wrote me that letter happens to take in THE WOMAN WORKER, will she write again, and so help to lessen a world of women's pain?

Is it Murder to Kill Babies?

A man takes me to task. My sympathy for Daisy Lord has blinded my eyes to the fact that she murdered her baby. And a woman who murders her baby is either a criminal or a lunatic, and as such should be imprisoned.

But if he were a woman he would know that depended on circumstances.

He says, moreover, that I mourn over Daisy having to lose the bud of her girlhood and the blossom of her womanhood in prison, forgetting that she has lost these already. Dear me, is that not like a mere man? I should say, having been a mother myself at nineteen, that she had just found them!

And while folk are wrangling about this that poor girl is in prison still.

SHALL WE ASK THE QUEEN to get her out? The Home Secretary is deaf and blind.

An Unhappy Husband.

Another man of a different type asks my advice. Five years ago, when he was a commercial traveller, he met Maggie. After three years' planning and saving, they got married. One evening Maggie put her arms round Fred's neck when they had been married 12 months and whispered something while she hid her face that made them both glad. Then there was much preparation of wee white clothes. But in two months there came a change, and Fred, who was an active member of the I.L.P., would not bow and scrape to his employer. He got the sack. The shock to Maggie was great, but she bore it bravely and cheered Fred all she could. Then he found other and worse-paid work; but the shock had done its work, and when the wee baby came it was

sadly deformed. This second shock turned the mother's brain, and she, a girl of 22, is now in the asylum, making no apparent progress towards recovery.

The little girl is just alive and that is all, and the lonely husband and father is desolate, without even the consolation of wifely letters.

Well, she is not dead. And while there is life there is hope. At that age, I should say there is every hope. Let him take heart and be glad at all events that he can keep the wolf from the door, and has not poverty and starvation to face as well as separation.

Also, I do feel that cases like this should be a warning to the dear, eager red-hot Socialists that there is something else to live for than clumsy propaganda. The Socialist who is wise will not lose a remunerative post through his Socialism. On the other hand, his Socialism will make him keep it, and use it for the Cause.

Mrs. MacLeish asks, Is Vaccination Compulsory in Scotland? I do not know, do you?

I had two shocks lately. The first was in a Hippodrome, round which were big posters with

Julia Dawson Makes her Bow.

Simply that and nothing more. Yesterday, for a change, I was in a temperance hall (which I left to get nearly drowned in a full gale crossing the Mersey). Round this hall were more posters: The Servant Problem, by Julia Dawson. I fairly gasped. What had I said about servants? I have plenty to say; and would love to say it. But so far as I remembered, I had only just begun to talk in THE WOMAN WORKER, and then made space for a long letter from somebody else. If folk bought that paper to read what I had to say they would be disappointed. Because I have not said it. Not half. But I will—some day. That is, if you would like.

Meantime, the letter from "Working Wife," on the Correspondence Page, is by a good friend of my own—a member of our Clarion Handicraft Guild, who makes beautiful things—among others, beautiful little children. Her little daughter, something like Stella, kissed me on the lips once, and I nearly got prosecuted for theft.

What do you think of her letter? If you are mistresses you will have felt how she feels—that I know. If you are maids you will also have felt how her maids felt. That I know, too. The tale is TRUE. It reminds me of a friend to whom I once unburdened a servant worry. "My dear," she said, "they are a 'class.' We may be Socialists as much as we like. But servant girls are a 'class' by themselves"; and she spread out her shapely hand, on which the wedding-ring was nearly new, in a way that brooked no further discussion.

But I reflected that they *are* a class. Of course they are. And so are mistresses. There is the trouble. Our population is composed of classes of every kind and sort, all at war with one another. In the old "Clarion" days we used to have societies of "Harmonious Wholes," folk of all classes who used to meet together to try and sink differences of class. And we succeeded, more or less. But the societies died; and we, the scattered members, are of the opinion that Socialism is the only remedy.

(For Answers to Correspondents, see page 672.)

FURNITURE AND PATIENCE.

By Maria Redring.

If, perchance, like me, it is your lot to live in a neighbourhood where money is scarce, you will be quite familiar with the cheap furniture shop.

Vulgar and ill-designed tables and sofas and chairs jostle aggressive wardrobes and horrid dressing-tables. And you will have read in big letters on the huge glass pane of the shopfront a legend running somewhat thus: "Why wait when you can get married at once and have a beautiful home for half-a-crown a week?"

If you have the sort of heart that loves lovers (and it's a poor sort of heart that does not), you will have heaved a sigh and thought how pitiful it is that the want of a little hewn wood and hardware should stand between a young couple and their happiness. And then you have sighed again and thought how much will stand between them and happiness, too, if they should follow the advice of this very loud-voiced furniture shop, and take what is sometimes called "the fatal plunge"!

Handicraft Guilds.

In connection with our beloved Socialist movement our friend Julia Dawson has sought to stimulate and encourage a love of simple beauty in the home, by forming Handicraft Guilds where simple and practical furniture and fittings are made, by holding exhibitions of handicraft; and by constant advice and example.

And she has obeyed an unerring instinct in doing so—an instinct that the democratic in art must be beauty allied with simplicity and directness. The "grand" may be permissible on occasion, the grandiose never. It is the outcome of pretentiousness, one of the vile things that the democratic movement will sweep away. In those happy days to come we women will not wait on our furniture. It will serve us: it will cease to swagger and give itself airs and make us feel small and keep us always busy. We shall clear our domestic shrine of false gods.

Under Socialism, machinery will only be used for making and doing the things that are monotonous or obnoxious. Machinery under capitalism is generally used to turn the money in, regardless of human comfort or pleasure. The handicrafter, though generally a person of simple wants, has to live. And our young men and maidens have largely a habit of getting married with but a few pence in their pockets and trusting to a kind Fate to see them through. What are they to do?

Setting Up House.

What not to do, of course, is to go to that said furniture shop and have a dining-room suite with stamped velvet and ricketty legs sent home. And that terrible painted bedroom suite with the rosebuds that will wash off the first time that Angelina washes the paint—a suite that is too bad for firewood. The sugar-box plan is better than that. Yes I know it is pathetic to talk about empty sugar-boxes and crates when you can have rosebuds; but wait a minute.

Our wise young couple will buy four simple wooden chairs—strong ones. These

will cost a few shillings. And a nursery table for the kitchen, because it will have nicely-turned and varnished legs, and, with a simple tablecloth to shade those legs, might be thought a dining table indeed. Twelve-and-six. Then the sugar-boxes come in. Standing on end, one above another, with a little rod and a curtain, they shelter the humble collection of glass and china. Lined with a little washable American cloth, another one acts as larder, if larder is lacking. Yet another serves for "housemaid's cupboard," and holds dustpan, brush, blacking brushes, and stove brushes. The tops of these should be covered also with American cloth; they will be useful as little dresser tables. A shelf for the saucepans above the gas-stove, a little cheap oilcloth for floor covering, a fender and a poker, and there is the kitchen. A japanned black iron scuttle for the coals will serve for awhile.

The parlour starts with a painted floor, a couple of basket chairs, a curb fender, and a crate (varnish stained) for a bookcase, a shelf being fixed half-way up. A rug is in front of the fire, a short end of carpet, neatly edged with fringe, such as can be bought of good carpet sellers at sale times. And when the young couple are visited by a friend or two, those friends sit on the basket armchairs in state, and the wooden ones are brought in out of the kitchen.

Yes, it is very humble and very meagre, but it can be done. They are free of debt, and directly a pound or two has been carefully saved, with what joy will our young couple plan to spend it, getting something good and worthy each time, a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

From America.

And if handicraft is out of reach, it is best to buy strong and simple fumed-oak from a first-class shop. It will be no dearer.

I have seen to-day a small collection of fumed-oak furniture from America. Mr. Joseph Fels—that very versatile man—brought it over after his last visit to the States, thinking the designs would interest Mrs. Julia Dawson and her Guilds. There are big "Morris" chairs with loose cushions. They take up space, but are so perfectly reposeful to sit in. The back is adjustable by means of a movable rod that fits into grooves, and the arms are like shelves on which books and a pipe may rest. There are desk chairs and rocking chairs of the same severely simple design, costing less than a sovereign, whilst the big comfy chairs would cost less than two.

I have not space to talk of desks and tables, though these were also of beautiful simplicity. But thoroughly American, and very artful and knowing, were the clothes poles. Think of a tall parrot-stand with six perches, or of a leafless young tree with six short branches, and you get an idea of this most handy article, the clothes pole with its six pegs. It is very light, and can be moved from room to room. I shall not live another week without a clothes pole.

FRIENDSHIP.

I ask thee not to share. O friend, with me
Thy sun, thy roses, youth's wild ecstasy;
But should each glittering hope sink
coldly down

And this now smiling; world austere
frown,
Come, then—and I will sit and weep with
thee.

I ask thee not to come when skies are fair,
Nor shed for me one joy-leaf from thy
hair;

But when the flowers are broken by
the blast,
The roses and the lilies dying fast,
Remember that I wait thy grief to share.

Sit in my heart and shelter from the rain;
Then, when the sky grows blue and bright
again,

I'll let thee flutter out from me once
more,
With gladness thrilling through the
heart's red core

That I was blessed to soothe thee in thy
pain.

For Friendship keeps, locked in her
limpid eyes,

Eternal sunbeams, never-changing skies;
And loves us for our frailties as our
worth,

And from the very moment of her
birth

Grows strong, though feeding but on
sorrow's sighs.

ETHEL CARNIE.

AN OLD-WORLD HEROINE.

She actually said "mate" for "meat," "appen" for "perhaps," and "oss" for "horse," which, to young ladies living in good Lytherley society, who habitually said "orse, even in domestic privacy, and only said "appen on the right occasions, was necessarily shocking. Miss Nancy, indeed, had never been to any school higher than Dame Tedman's; her acquaintance with profane literature hardly went beyond the rhymes she had worked in her large sampler under the lamb and the shepherdess; and in order to balance an account she was obliged to effect her subtraction by removing visible metallic shillings and sixpences from a visible metallic total. There is hardly a servant maid in these days who is not better informed than Miss Nancy; yet she had the essential attributes of a lady—high veracity, delicate honour in her dealings, deference to others, and refined personal habits—and lest these should not suffice to convince grammatical fair ones that her feelings can at all resemble theirs, I will add that she was slightly proud and exacting, and as constant in her affection towards a baseless opinion as towards an erring lover.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Though there is little in a woman's advice, yet he that won't take it is not over-wise.—SANCHO PANZA.

Beyond everything, he believed in freedom; he never saw the things that his way of acting prevented him from doing, and so believed his life to be the freest in the world.—JOHN GALSWORTHY.

A Bard at the Braes.

By Margaret McMillan.

Mairi woke early and looked around the little room where she had passed the night.

Simple as were its appointments, she felt a vague uneasiness as well as wonder. The room was like a book. She could not read it. The curtains, the neat walls, the even floor, the white roof—how strange it seemed! She began to sing, but hushed suddenly. The furniture seemed to rebuke her.

It was the Sabbath morning—a fair, bright day. Outside, the little town sat quiet by the river. The streets were empty. The red castle, with its round towers and with the gaol in its rear, looked down from the green hill. In a little while the bells would begin to ring from west and east.

The little town had two communities—the ancient and the modern.

The people of the older community still spoke Gaelic—a beautiful, pure Gaelic, the Gaelic of the capital. They dressed rather sadly; and the older women wore black handkerchiefs over their nitches (save, of course, the richer women, who had large bonnets). This community attended the churches on the east and north side, which always had a shadowed appearance.

Over the bridge, and down the river-side to the New Cathedral, streamed the gay modern world—people who did not know the Gaelic and had organs in their churches. The older community was quite in the shade (Ah, me! What the stars were in that shadow!).

Mairi, coming forth with John Murdoch, stood abashed for a moment, caught in a stream of English ladies in tulle bonnets and clergymen from the south.

"Where are we going?" she asked, nervously, and was reassured at once. She was going to the North Church.

Mairi soon found herself in a quiet throng of country people. The waiting psalm tune rose and fell like the autumn wind in the corries—sad and strange, as if with farewells to Beauty already departed.

Mairi had all the while a vision of the Braes men—so close and yet so far—alone in the gaol of the castle. They would not mind the hard fare, the rough bed—for they had always fared hard, and slept on a narrow and rude couch. But for the stony stillness that was round them now, the sweet hush of wave and hill had not prepared them.

"I am going to the Laird of D—," she said to John Murdoch, as they sat down to table after church. "It is the Sabbath, but I cannot rest. He has a big party for the northern meetings. Lord MacDonald himself is there."

John Murdoch did not try to dissuade her.

He watched her from the door as she set forth. The Cathedral people were streaming across the bridge, and a ripple of soft talk mingled with the tinkle of sunny water. No one looked at the uncouthly-dressed old woman, who hurried forward, holding a heavy stick in one hand and an old black-bound Bible in the other.

Lord MacDonald had come with many friends from Oban, where, at the Highland gathering (the gentry and nobility of Scotland muster in force at Oban and Inverness in autumn for games and balls), he had listened to the advice of other lairds or landlords, who declared that in the interests of his class he ought to go to the Braes and settle matters with his crofters. So Mairi's information was perfectly correct. He was here.

Why should she not speak with him—and with his friends?

As for his host, the Laird of D—, she knew him very well. He was a friend. He had given her the little house which was her home at a nominal rent, and she was very grateful to him.

Yet, in spite of his kindness, she trembled now as she journeyed alone to his great house in the country.

Like many another soul with narrow education and great powers, she was confused, uncertain at times, and a prey to her own active imagination. She had an instinctive reverence for the "gentry" who spoke in such sweet musical accents, and who were always courteous and kind. And then, impressionable as she was, and a born lover of beauty, she identified with her feeling of reverence for them all her subtle appreciation of the softness, harmony, and glow of their trappings and environment.

Thus, in a kind of anguish of doubt and apprehension, as well as travel-stained and weary, she found herself at last in the great hall of the Laird's house.

She was kindly, nay, cordially, received. If she was not at once carried into the heart of the goodly company, that was because the host and hostess understood too well how to make their humble guest welcome. They sent her food and gave her time to rest, and then she came into the great drawing-room.

People of all ranks love genius. It is like a fire, and they come to warm themselves. If it is dressed in wincey and carries a big stick, it is all the more wonderful—like a great light in a rude hovel. All the Highland ladies, and the men, too, came round Mairi.

She, for her part, was not at all troubled now. This great house with its lofty roof and noble pillars, and the floor with its soft green carpet, did not disturb her as the little house had done. It was too like the natural world which she loved so well. And the gentle eyes that looked on her were as stars, and the softly-moving figures like the people of her dreams.

Moreover, they asked of her what the children asked—in the children's words: "O, Mairi, tell us a tale! Sing us one of your songs!"

So, in the wonderful Gaelic, which many of them knew, she improvised for them as for the children. Yet she improvised as she had never done before; for deep below all her words there was sorrow and pity for her friends, sitting alone all this while in the cold cells. Like a wave below her words was this sorrow; and long ere she ceased there were tears in many bright eyes; there were warm tears even in the eyes of the Laird.

Lord MacDonald, standing in the shadow of a great curtain, may have wept or not. I cannot say.

It was this moment that was Mairi's opportunity. She turned to the Laird, and her voice ceased. There was a pause, and then she said, in low accents:

"You know of our sorrow in Skye," he said, coldly. "Your friends ought to have more sense."

"Sense!" cried Mairi, boldly. "Sense! When people are starving they have to speak, and that is how it is at the Braes."

The figure near the window had moved into the distance—a safe distance.

Mairi folded her hands. "Save them!" she said, imploringly, to the Laird. "Don't let them be kept in prison—the good men that would die for you and the like of you."

"Oh, Mairi!" said the Laird, vexed but relenting. "I'm afraid they'll get themselves into worse trouble one day. His Lordship won't stand nonsense, you know. But he's going to the Braes himself this week."

"Thank God!" cried Mairi, overjoyed. "Then it will come all right. If he had come before it would not have happened." The Laird turned away abruptly.

"They will not keep the men in gaol, surely," said Mairi again, blindly sticking to her point. "They ought to be at home for the harvest."

"Oh, they'll be liberated directly," said the Laird. Then, his brow clearing a little, he said: "I hope you'll encourage them to behave properly for the future, Mairi. This has been disgraceful—entirely disgraceful on their part. However, it will, I have no doubt, be a lesson to them. And now, Mairi," he went on, as the ladies, a little bored by this serious conversation, drew away, "I hope you will have a good meal before starting on the journey home. Angus shall drive you part of the way. It is a long road and the evenings are uncommonly chilly. Tell Mrs. MacDonald—the housekeeper—to give you a warm carriage wrap."

Thus the interview ended. Mairi had a warm drink and some excellent food. She was wrapped in a fine plaid, and, seated by the groom's side in a tall dog-cart, she allowed herself to exult over her visit and the news she had received. The prisoners would go home. The Lord of the Isles would meet them in their own village, and all would be well.

POSSESSION.

Half the world has things, and the other half enjoys them. . . . The great white clouds surge seething up as if from a giant's cauldron—the subtle secrets of light and shade, and all the wondrous mystery contained in the brooding mellow glow of the atmosphere. And this in Saxon Switzerland? Even so; and I don't suppose it was needful to go so far. A bit of breezy moorland where the cotton-grass flutters on the wind, or a clover-field and hedgerow in June, have done as much for some men. There are those who can enter the kingdom even through a needle's eye.

GRAHAM TRAVERS.

A POLITICIAN'S DAUGHTER

"No," he said. "Things have changed—the people have changed. The old method of politics, which was wrong, although it had some justification in conditions, has gone out. I am at liberty to say this much to you now," he added, fixing his glance upon her, "because my father has resigned as Counsel for the North-Eastern, and I have just had a talk with—Mr. Flint."

"You have seen my father?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Yes," he answered.

"You did not agree," she said, quickly.

His blood beat higher at the question and the manner of her asking it, but he felt he must answer it honestly, unequivocally, whatever the cost.

"No, we did not agree. It is only fair to tell you that we differed—vitaly. On the other hand, it is just that you should know that we did not part in anger, but, I think, with a mutual respect."

She drew breath. . . .

Suddenly, with a characteristic movement of determination, he swung about and came towards her, and at the same instant she rose.

"Don't you think we should be going back?" she said.

But he seemed not to hear her.

"May I ask you something?" he said.

"That depends," she answered.

"Are you going to marry Mr. Rangely?"

"No," she said, and turned away.

"Why did you think that?"

He quivered.

"Victoria!"

She looked up at him, swiftly, half revealed, her eyes like stars surprised by the flush of dawn in her cheeks. Hope quickened at the vision of hope, the seats of judgment themselves were filled with radiance, and rumour cowered and fled like the spirit of night. He could only gaze, enraptured.

"Yes?" she answered.

His voice was firm but low, yet vibrant with sincerity, with the vast store of feeling, of compelling magnetism that was in the man and moved in spite of themselves those who knew him. His words Victoria remembered afterwards—all of them; but it was to the call of the voice she responded. His was the fibre which grows stronger in times of crisis. Sure of himself, proud of the love which he declared, he spoke as a man who has earned that for which he pays—simply and with dignity.

"I love you," he said. "I have known it since I have known you, but you must see why I could not tell you so. It was very hard, for there were times when I led myself to believe that you might come to love me. There were times when I should have gone away if I hadn't made a promise to stay in Ripton. I ask you to marry me, because I know I shall love you as long as I live. I can give you this at least, and I can promise to protect and cherish you. I cannot give you that to which you have been accustomed all your life, that which you have here at Fairview, but I shouldn't say this to you if I believed that you cared for them above—other things."

"Oh, Austen!" she cried. "I do not—I do not! They would be hateful to

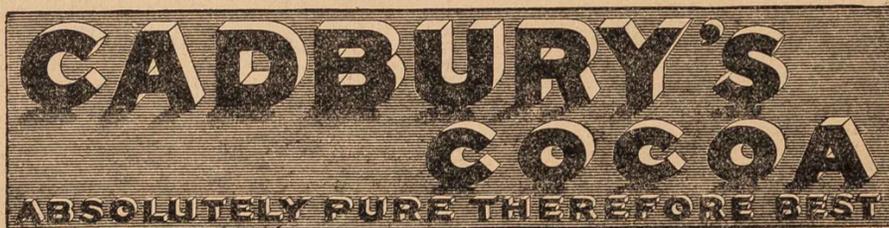
me—without you. I would rather live with you—at Jabe Jenney's"; and her voice caught in an exquisite note between laughter and tears. "I love you, do you understand, *you!* Oh, how could you ever have doubted it? How could you? What you believe I believe. And, Austen, I have been so unhappy for three days."

He never knew whether, as the most precious of graces ever conferred upon man, with a womanly gesture she had raised her arms and her hands upon his shoulders before he drew her to him and kissed her face, that vied in colour with the coming glow in the western sky. Above the prying eyes of men, above the world itself, he held her, striving to realise some of the vast joy of this possession, and failing. And at last she drew away from him, gently, that she might look searchingly into his face again, and shook her head slowly.

"And you were going away," she said, "without a word! I thought—you didn't care. How could I have known that you were just stupid?"

"Mr. Crewe's Career."

Good and friendly conduct may meet with an unworthy, with an ungrateful, return; but the absence of gratitude on the part of the receiver cannot destroy the self-approbation which recompenses the giver; and we may scatter the seeds of courtesy and kindness around us at so little expense. Some of them will inevitably fall on good ground, and grow up into benevolence in the minds of others; and all of them will bear fruit of happiness in the bosom whence they spring. Once blest are all the virtues; twice blest sometimes.—JEREMY BENTHAM.



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THE SUFFRAGISTS IN PRISON.

By Elizabeth Sloan Chesson, M.B.

There is a popular idea that those women who go to prison for their convictions enjoy the experience—that they like the notoriety, and that prison is made rather agreeable than not for them. The idea is quite erroneous. Many of them have been in prison twice or three times; some have suffered in health for months afterwards; and those who have had one experience of prison dread from the bottom of their hearts the days and weeks of prison routine, of prison food, and prison discipline.

They go to prison for their convictions—because they think that through their sufferings their sister women will get the vote sooner; because they feel that the vote will do a great deal for their sex, and that only by what has come to be called "militant tactics" will woman's suffrage be won.

These women are not treated as political prisoners.

They have to serve their sentence along with other prisoners, convicted of theft or drunkenness, or worse. They have to endure an experience which would break the spirit of many a strong man, and some of them will carry the scars to their graves.

Let me give you an idea of what they go through, and even if you are an ardent anti-Suffragist you will surely feel that those women are suffering nobly for what they believe to be a just cause.

The first experience is the drive in the prison van, and it must be a somewhat dreadful ordeal to anybody whose nerves are not cast-iron.

"Aunt Maria."

The van is quite dark inside. The prisoners sit in little cage-like apartments, whilst the policeman stands on guard at one end. The atmosphere is stifling. After an hour's jolting and rumbling across London the women are deposited in the yard at Holloway in a dazed and frightened condition.

They are then taken to the underground reception cells, which are about five feet square, and very dark and ill-ventilated. Sometimes two, three, or even five prisoners will be locked in these cold cubicles, waiting till the doctor is ready to see them. They may be kept there for hours—sometimes from five in the afternoon till eleven o'clock or later. Miss Pankhurst told me that some of the prisoners are kept there till two or three in the morning.

Then they have to strip, bath, and put on the prison clothes. First division prisoners wear pepper-and-salt dresses, second division green dresses, and third division brown, all liberally marked with the broad arrow. A very small division of the prisoners are first and second class; 90 per cent. or more are third division.

The early batches of Suffragists were placed in the third division, and some still are; the present prisoners are certainly less hardly treated, owing to kindly agitations in the House of Commons and elsewhere on their behalf. They are supposed to get prison clothes, for example, which have been previously worn by other Suffragist prisoners. If they are vegetarians they get a special

diet; and, if in the second division, they are allowed warm water to wash in.

The prison clothes are heavy, badly made, and ill-fitting. No garters are provided, and the heavy stockings are constantly slipping over the clumsy shoes.

All the big women seem to be provided with the small garments, and the little women to be supplied with huge bodices and skirts, and shoes two or three sizes too large. There is a scarcity of buttons and draw-strings, and the wide-banded petticoat has to be pinned across to keep it in place. The bodice is fastened at the neck with one button, and each prisoner wears a white cap and checked apron.

The Cells.

These measure about 12ft. by 7ft.

There is a window high up in the outer wall, which is barred outside and cannot be opened. The bed, a slab of wood raised a few feet from the floor, is furnished with mattress and pillow stuffed with grass fibre. A pair of sheets, two blankets and a woollen quilt are rolled into bundles by day, and deposited along with the mattress in a corner of the cell. There is a shelf to hold the tin feeding utensils, Prayer-book, etc.

The prisoners are awakened by a bell in the dark early hours.

The floor, utensils, shelf, table, etc., have to be scrubbed before six o'clock. Then breakfast is served: six ounces of dry bread and a pint of "skilly" or gruel. A great many of the prisoners suffer from indigestion from eating the hot new bread and the lack of outdoor exercise. Then the prisoners sew till eight o'clock, when they form in line in the corridors and march to the chapel.

Not a word is spoken. A sharp reprimand from the wardress in charge follows upon a glance of understanding between two prisoners. The service is a sad experience for most of the prisoners. Some of them cry as they think of their dear ones at home; one or two seem to enjoy the singing after the enforced silence of their cells.

After chapel they go to work. The Suffragists are generally provided with sewing. They have to sit hour after hour hemming coarse sheets, of which fifteen must be made in a week.

Prison Labour.

The ordinary prisoners sew, or wash, or scrub the corridors and rooms. Some pick the fibre stuffing of the beds. Many work in the laundry. A few help in the kitchens.

Dinner is served at twelve. Three days a week a pint of porridge and six ounces of bread; two days a week cold suet pudding and bread, and two other days potatoes and bread.

Supper is at five; again skilly and bread. Then the cells are locked up for the night. From five o'clock till six next morning they stay in their cells. They spend the long sleepless night tossing and thinking of the future.

The monotony and loneliness and terrible silence take the heart out of them. The lack of outdoor exercise and healthy work affects their health and depresses their minds. The exercise in the prison

yard is insufficient to keep them in health; they march drearily round in single file, in their heavy shoes, dragging their feet, not allowed to speak, not even allowed to look about them. Each woman is known by her number.

"Lift your feet, twelve!" "Keep up your shoulders, ten!" "Don't look about you!" says the sharp voice of the wardress in charge; for many wardresses take a pleasure in petty tyrannies and unnecessary cruelty.

So the days pass, and the weeks, and the months, till the Suffragists have served their "time" and the prison door is unbarred for them to return to life and work outside.

Have they advanced their cause by their unhappy experience? Time alone will tell. All through history the people who have been willing to go to prison for their cause have won success in the end.

THE DISAPPOINTED.

There are songs enough for the hero
Who stands on the heights of fame;

I sing for the disappointed—

For those who missed their aim.

I sing with a cheerful cadence,

For one who toils in the dark,

And knows that his last, best arrow

Has bounded back from the mark.

I sing for the breathless runner,

The eager, anxious soul,

Who falls in the race exhausted,

Almost in sight of the goal;

For the hearts that break in silence,

With a sorrow all unknown—

For those who need companions,

Yet walk their way alone.

There are songs enough for the lovers

Who share love's tender pain;

I sing for the one whose passion

Is given, and in vain;

For those whose spirit comrades

Have missed them on the way,

I sing with heart o'erflowing

This minor strain to-day.

And I know the solar system

Must somewhere keep in space

A prize for that spent runner

Who barely lost the race.

For the plan would be imperfect

Unless it held some sphere

That paid for the toil and talent

And love that are wasted here.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

The soul's armour is never well set to
the heart unless a woman's hand has
braced it.—RUSKIN.

If you consider an ideal impossible, you
are a fool to give it a second thought. If
it is possible, you are a coward to accept
anything less.—JOHN OLIVER HOBBS.

The fire that is in strong men has ever
been a lure to women, and many meaning
to play with it have been burnt thereby
since the world began. But to turn the
fire to some use, to make the world better
for it, or stronger for it, that were an
achievement indeed.—CHURCHILL.

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Dialogue with a Daughter.

By A. Neil Lyons.

Constance Mary, the pudding-faced girl who brings me my milk from the farm on the hill, stopped at my gate the other morning and politely rapped it with a hob-nailed boot.

"Good mornin' to you, sir!" exclaimed Constance, as I projected my head from the parlour window. "'Tis frosty weather, sir. Mind if I use the scraper?"

Receiving a cordial invitation to scrape away, Constance opened the gate to an extent of six inches and applied one of the hob-nailed feet to a fragment of scythe-blade which is attached to the inner side of the post. "I be gooun along to the 'All," she explained; "I allus options to look spick when I goos a errand to the Gentry. Ain't seed old Bill anywheres, I s'p'ose?"

"Bill who?" I inquired.

"Bill Priest," said Constance. I shook my head. In point of fact, I did not know Bill Priest. Even his name was strange to me. "Do you mean that one-eyed young fellow with red hair?" I hazarded.

"One eye?" echoed Constance. "Red hair? Why, certainly not. 'Tis old Bill Priest I speak of; 'im what 'ave grey whiskers and walk one-sided and let 'is wife go out to work for 'im. 'Tis that old sot, I mean. Ain't you seed 'im anywheres?"

Again I shook my head. "Ugly mannered old swine!" exclaimed my visitor—" 'Tis Bill Priest I speak of," she hastened to add. "If I was to meet 'im up the lane now, do you know what I should reckon to do? I should fetch 'im a clip aside of the ear. I be fair upset wi' old Bill Priest; the lazy old beggar. I shaped to think perhaps 'e'd found a job along of you up yere."

"I don't think I know the man," I said.

"Not know old Bill Priest!" cried Constance Mary; "the ugliest, artfullest, drunkardest old fox in the parish! Well I be surprised. You must 'a sin 'im many times a-thievin' faggits up the lane yere. You would reckon 'im anywheres, because he walk one-sided an' got grey whiskers and don't never 'urry 'isself—unless 'tis to go to the beer-ouse. Then 'e can move, I promise you. Fancy you not know Bill Priest. That do surprise me. I thought as everybody knew the wicked old devil. 'Tis seven week on Saturday since ever 'e brought 'ome a shillin', and 'is wife a bailiff's darter what throw up a good situation to marry with 'im. They was everyone agin 'er actin' so; but she were proper stuck upon the blessed man, and when a woman get stuck upon a man she do act soft. Be damned to the men, I say. What good fe they to anybody, anyways? On'y a nuisance to themselves and a trouble in the 'ouse. And the gals they be pret' nigh equal for foolishness, simmingly. I aren't got no patience wi' none o' them; on'y wi' babies, then, and old women. I lay as Bill's old woman be pretty sore to think of ever the day she sin 'im; though, the old gal don't grumble much, and that's

a sure thing. She be one o' the proper, old-fashioned sort. 'Tis always they sort what git a man like Bill. 'E be so ignorant, 'e don't trouble to get no work when there be work about. 'E got a pipe in his face most always, and when 'e aren't got that 'e chew a straw. If on'y 'e was to walk top-sided 'e wouldn't look so ignorant.

"That surprise me you don't know 'im. Aren't you ever sin 'im wi' the 'ounds, then? 'E be allus followin' the 'ounds. Wherever theer's a meeting of the 'ounds there you'll find old Billy Priest. That's a sure thing. 'E beant never late for that job. 'Tis sport, that is. 'Twould never do be late for that. Sure you aren't never sin 'im? A red complexion, spotted, 'omely man what walk one-sided an' got a lot to say. 'E don't say much at 'ome, an' that's a sure thing. 'E keep 'is place at 'ome. 'E got four strong daughters what's bin brought up, not dragged up same as 'im, and if 'e don't know 'e's ignorant, they do. Could you gimme a drink o' water, sir?"

"That make me thirsty, when I talk about Bill Priest," exclaimed my visitor, sipping her third glass of water. "It surprise me you don't know him. 'Tis a wonder he aren't bin yere 'fore now, nosin' for a job to botch your place about. I don't wish the man no 'arm. If you got any work to give out, Bill Priest might 'ave it as well as anybody else; on'y I wish you wouldn't give 'im any money."

I pointed out that Bill Priest was probably one of those sordid men who expected to be paid for their labour. "My meanin' is," said Constance Mary, "not to give no money into 'is 'and. Keep back 'is money, if you understand my meanin'. Mo'er or me, we'll take care o' that."

In respect of this suggestion, I ventured to express a fear that Bill would not submit to his lawful wage being estimated on behalf of strangers.

"Strangers!" echoed Constance Mary. "The law," I observed, "does not permit that sort of thing. It is no doubt very hard on your mother to be the creditor of a blackguard like Bill, but—"

"Strangers!" repeated Constance Mary. "That's a queer set-out, then, for a man to reckon isselt a stranger to 'is wife."

"But you asked me to give the money to your mother," I protested.

"Don't you know, then?" said Constance Mary. "Aren't I told you? Mo'er, poor soul, she be his wife. This old Billy Priest, he reckon to be my dad."

Art, with her expressive face, Steps forth to fashion and refine the race. COWPER.

Little Bert's mother sent him to bring a small switch from the garden to whip his sister with. After being gone a long time, he came in with his hands full of clods of dirt.

"I can't find any switch," he said; "here, throw these at her."

THE GOOD TIME COMING.

"Tell me, then," said I, "how is it towards the east?"

Said he: "Time was when if you mounted a good horse and rode straight away from my door here at a round trot for an hour and a-half, you would still be in the thick of London, and the greater part of that would be 'slums,' as they were called; that is to say, places of torture for innocent men and women; or worse, stews for rearing and breeding men and women in such degradation that that torture should seem to them mere ordinary and natural life."

"I know, I know," I said, rather impatiently. "That was what was; tell me something of what is. Is any of that left?"

"Not an inch," said he; "but some memory of it abides with us, and I am glad of it. Once a year, on May Day, we hold a solemn feast in those easterly communes of London to commemorate the Clearing of Misery, as it is called. On that day we have music and dancing, and merry games and happy feasting on the site of some of the worst of the old slums, the traditional memory of which we have kept. On that occasion the custom is for the prettiest girls to sing some of the old revolutionary songs, and those which were the groans of discontent, once so hopeless, on the very spots where those terrible crimes of class-murder were committed day by day for so many years. To a man like me, who have studied the past so diligently, it is a curious and touching sight to see some beautiful girl, daintily clad, and crowned with flowers from the neighbouring meadows, standing amongst the happy people, on some mound where of old time stood the wretched apology for a house, a den in which men and women lived packed amongst the filth like pilchards in a cask: lived in such a way that they could only have endured it, as I said just now, by being degraded out of humanity—to hear the terrible words of threatening and lamentation coming from her sweet and beautiful lips, and she unconscious of their real meaning: to hear her, for instance, singing Hood's 'Song of the Shirt,' and to think that all the time she does not understand what it is all about—a tragedy grown inconceivable to her and her listeners. Think of that, if you can, and of how glorious life is grown!"

"Indeed," said I, "it is difficult for me to think of it."

"News From Nowhere."

Love is the purification of the heart from self; it strengthens and ennobles the character, gives a higher motive and a nobler aim to every action of life, and makes both man and woman strong, noble, and courageous; and the power to love truly and devotedly is the noblest gift with which a human being can be endowed; but it is a sacred fire that must not be burnt to idols.—Miss Jewsbury.

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A BOOK OF THE HOUR.

Rebel Women.*

Have you ever asked yourselves what was the meaning of witches?

How did it come about that old women and young, famous women and obscure women, were willing for so many hundred years to be tortured and burnt, or at any rate to run the risk of such martyrdoms? What sort of women were they at heart? What did they believe, if anything? And if they believed nothing very harmful, why were they so cruelly persecuted? In a word, was there anything to excuse the barbarity with which they were done to death in Europe till modern times brought gentler ways of dealing and of thinking?

To me, for one, the miseries of these poor women have always been a fascinating horror. Whatever they believed or did, they were human and not supernatural. That was certain. However malignant they were, they could have done nothing to merit the ugly and awful fate that continually befel them at the hands of religious and civil authorities. That was certain, too. The malignity of their persecutors looked always worse by far than their own could have been.

And when I read of their saturnalian "Sabbaths," their great midnight gatherings in secret places, and realised that these were actually held—held in spite of all the terrors that law and the Churches could devise, and held for no rational purpose—I wondered.

If they did not assemble joyfully to meet his Satanic Majesty, why did they assemble? Let them have been as evil-minded as you please—admit all that was said against them by ignorant priests and magistrates—suppose, even, that they put some sort of greater trust in an Evil Power than in a Good Power—what was the human principle that enabled these poor creatures to nurse their delusions with so much heroism, and to defy the utmost rigour of authority?

They were mostly women. Why? And what sort of women would they have been to-day?

There is an answer to some of these questions in what we know of human nature without consulting curious lore. We know that persecutions make the meat they feed on.

Deny liberty, practise any kind of tyranny, and you will always have rebels and outlaws. These for ever appear amongst us, to keep the flag of freedom flying; and, as a rule, humanity goes forward under their leadership. There were witches' "Sabbaths," with all sorts of impious ceremonial, partly because the clerical power made itself hated.

But civilisation, you say, owed nothing of its advance to witches. They were very ignorant women, and they achieved nothing useful. We are well rid of them.

True. They were ignorant women. But, until modern times, ignorance was the lot of nearly all, and especially the lot of women. Persecutors and victims

* "The Book of Witches." By Oliver Madox Hueffer. 10s. 6d. net. Eveleigh Nash.

were alike believers in the foolish body of superstitions called witchcraft.

And the religious creeds that prompted persecution were equally foolish. Is there really nothing for which we can be grateful to the poor old hags who lost their lives because they did not share those creeds? We are all glad that such creeds have perished; do we owe no reparation to the memory of their sorriest victims?

Mr. Oliver Madox Hueffer, in a curious new book of his, persuades one that we do. There is a way to think gratefully of witches even. And why should it be harder to do so, because they burnt wax effigies and were said to ride on broomsticks, and sail in eggshells, than it is to be glad of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, or the Smithfield bonfires, or the Witch-Bull of Pope Innocent VIII., under which hapless thousands of old women were burnt to death?

To understand witches, we have to go back a long way in the world's history—back to the times when the dark arts they practised were known only to priestesses and priests of the pagan religions. They represented the survival of those religions.

But that is not all. The arts they practised, when taken up by educated men like Gebir and Albertus Magnus—who, being clerics, were supposed to aim at governing Satan instead of selling themselves to him—were the stepping-stones to natural science. You have to remember that, ten centuries ago, Mr. Edison and Mr. Wilbur Wright would have taken exalted rank as magicians.

Magicians were famous, witches infamous. Why? Only because the Church in those days denied to one sex the education that might have enabled a woman here and there to discover something, as Gebir discovered nitrate of silver, and Roger Bacon (probably) gunpowder. We have women who are chemists and astronomers in these days. Pope Innocent VIII. would have had them tied to stakes and lighted barrels of tar about them.

So there seems to be another human principle that cannot be suppressed—namely, the desire of knowledge. Mrs. Derry still thinks it mischievous, but it persists.

It looks as if superstition were a radically different thing; and Mr. Hueffer seems inclined to defend it even as giving a spice to life, whether it ever leads to scientific research or remains a mere affair of freakish imaginings. But the fact remains that out of superstitious practices pure science was evolved. We need such practices no longer, and they appeal to those great enemies, Ignorance and Fear.

So there is one point on which I do not agree with Mr. Hueffer. I think he talks cheap nonsense. For example:

Witchcraft has brought happiness out of misery. Consider the unsuccessful man. Under the régime of enlightenment he can find no one to blame for his sorrows, nor anywhere to look for their solacement. Everything works according to immutable laws; he

is sick, poor, miserable, because the Law of the Inevitable will have it so; he has no God to whom he can pray for some capricious alleviations; he cannot buy good fortune from the Devil even at the price of his soul—there is no God, nor Devil, nor good fortune, nor ill; nothing but the imperturbably grinding cogwheels upon whose orbit he is bound. Were he not a happier man if he could find an old-time witch whose spells, being removed, would leave him hope, even though fulfilment never come? Undoubtedly.

I take this to be meant half humorously. The style of the last two sentences is affected, and by his affectations you may know one sort of humorist. But it is meant half seriously as well. There are other references to the "tyranny of facts."

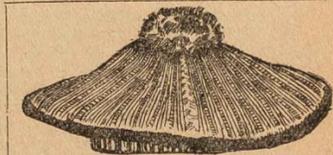
Why (asks Mr. Hueffer) should we accept the scientist more than his grandmother, the witch? We have no better reason for accepting him than for rejecting what he tells us are no more than idle dreams.

Have we not? Does not the scientist do things rather more openly and surely?

It is better to be funny than dull, no doubt; but, if Mr. Hueffer means anything at all he should find a better way of putting it. Nowadays there is hope for the unsuccessful man in this good life that we are going to master; and the "solacement" he needs is not to be found in superstitions very much longer. KEICILEY SNOWDEN.

BABETTE.

You are naught but a little coquette,
Babette!
With your saucy cock'd lips and cig'rette,
Babette!
Your waywardness oft makes me fret,
Babette!
There are times when I wish we'd ne'er
met,
Babette!
But there's pleasure mixed up with regret,
Babette! Babette!
I'm thoroughly caught in your net,
Babette!
And you treat me just like a puppef,
Babette!
Yea, I wish I were heart-whole, and yet,
Babette!
Though you're naught but a little
coquette!
Babette!
And you oughtn't to smoke a cig'rette,
Babette!
I don't wish you to ask me to "get,"
Not yet, Babette!
ANON.



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BARBARA WEST.

By Keighley Snowden.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—(Continued.)

Ad Hominem.

Death has been called the price of life; but this price is like a sum uncounted and uncountable. Life is all that we can reckon.

It was this greatest of all facts, and not alone his ignorance of more than this, that struck poor Barbara's lover with his worst dismay. If death had been immediate, if he had had no time to think before being summoned again to the dear presence for farewells, these would have got themselves said in one way or another; and what matter how, if lovingly and bravely? But he had time to think.

And he could not. He could only feel that he had lost her as she once was, and that he was losing her now, as he still loved her.

Loved her like a thing beyond price. This is what death proves to us—that life is beyond price. It made her driving him away a mere nothing, of course; he must go to her; he must leave his work and be ready to pass with Barbara as many of the numbered hours as she might ask of him. On the word of a doctor—who should know—there was little of her dear life left.

It was funny, his trying to think about uncertainties; afterwards he said so. It did not seem entirely brave.

Indeed, after making the call that Sunday morning to find that Barbara did not need him, he was inclined to go for comfort to his friend Macdonald, who seemed so wise. With him he talked the mysteries over sometimes. But he felt when that weak impulse came that neither Macdonald nor anyone else could tell him what to say to Barbara.

Years after he found in a drawer some thoughts that he set down then, to ease anxiety and grief with occupation.

They read very strangely. He could never understand the want of feeling in them. He would always remember how cold he was as he sat writing, and how he had to grip the pen and write some words twice. The grief was such that his heart seemed bursting. Think, he did not; he only assembled thoughts—to kill the hours and give himself courage. If he had thought really, he would have written about what he felt, no doubt.

Well; perhaps it was funny. He had the right things to say to her in his boy's heart, and here is all he put on paper—in a precise, journalistic way:

"I can say to her—
(1) That, if a God made us, He is responsible for us; for what we are and what becomes of us.

(2) That, if there is a life after death, it is likely to be a finer life, not to be meaner, harder, or sadder; because all kinds of life even in this world are developing.

(3) That, as we have no memory of a life before this, there is no reason to think we shall remember this. Possibly a fresh start, like happy children."

He added some other thoughts, reflections upon Paine and Varley's presence on the planet. They came again to him, of course, as bearing on the tragedy of Barbara.

"Men: Why didn't God make all perfect? Because there would have been nothing for us to try for, nothing worth accomplishing, no strong interest in life. Is that a sufficient reason? Perhaps He isn't perfect, i.e., unable to make anything better any more. If he were, it would limit Him. Perhaps creation is always going on.

"My idea of why He makes anything: Because He grows by doing things, like us. Doing is really being. Life is energy.

"Anyhow, a God all alone in His majesty, and satisfied with that, would be a poor sort of Deity: just a sublime egoist. So I think God wanted company and must be good-natured. He must sympathise.

"Surely meant us to be happy. As happy as we can be. We have to find out how, of course; if we hadn't we should be either hopeless or perfect. (See above.)"

One thing Macdonald would have seen with pride, could he have looked over Enoch's shoulder: there was nothing set down about blame. Macdonald's greatest concern, with his young disciple, had been to weed out the disposition to blame from his nature. He considered that evil is ignorance, and blame is ignorance. All forms of suffering are signs of it, and spur us on to wisdom.

But why did the pen shake in Enoch's fingers? Why was he afraid?

Face to face with mystery, whether the mystery of Death or any other, Man should feel no fear. To fear is to be unmanned. To fear the mystery of Death, as he had been taught to do, was barbarous.

For all the mystery of Life is beautiful, and that of Death is only part of it. When Man shall have made of his own life the thing he may, and, being happy, sees how beautiful it is, then, at last, he must learn to think of the two mysteries as one and inseparable. Then he may judge a little of what is unknown by what is known, or be content not knowing. He will not fear.

But Enoch was very sick at heart, as he had cause to be.

"Content," Mrs. Shuttlewell said of her. "More content." He did not believe it. Quiet, he supposed she was; and that set his fancy working.

Now, at all events, he began to imagine a little of her long sufferings and present sadness. He forgot Enoch Watson; and the manhood within him, dormant till this time, sprang suddenly up to rebel against her fate.

There was something on her mind, no doubt; but what did it matter? She had not deserved to suffer so. It was not why she suffered.

Ah, he loved her! Now he said it aloud—angrily. He kept repeating it; for he hated himself in useless rage for having once relinquished her. He had been very small, he thought. He did not at all admire what he had been. A mean thing—that hardened a mean heart to forsake her. But now, if he was not the meanest thing alive in guessing ill of her—

if what he guessed were even the ugly truth, or if the truth were worse, far

worse—now he loved her. What had fallen her he did not want to know; she was Barbara.

So ran his high feeling, and so we like him; do we not? But the good prudes will please to observe that when he had ignorantly tried to tell her so, she could not listen.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Levels.

To what went on about her now, Barbara paid no heed. Her cat mewed from the window-sill ungreeter, bright days and dull were as one; she still lay quiet. But there came an afternoon when, through the open door, she overheard Mrs. Shuttlewell speaking to some inquirer.

The words came very distinctly to her ears. "I'm a dreadful nuisance now," she said once, "but I do want to keep Con from fretting. He still thinks I'm going to get well, poor boy."

"Why, so you will, doy," said Mrs. Shuttlewell, her heart stumbling; "so you will, if God please, and be happy wi' him yet."

"We are happy now, I think, for a little while," Barbara mused. "But oh, I am so tired, dear Mrs. Shuttlewell. And I shall never pay your bill! Still that is all right, you know; you must make it out—I shall get you to promise—and Con will pay it for me. And you are to have my dresses and things, if you can make any use of them."

She turned away for a towel. "Nay, barne, you munnot talk so," she said; and Barbara, when her face had been gently wiped, saw tears running down the dear lined cheeks.

"Don't cry," she said. "You make me want to cry too, and Barb'a West has to be very pleasant. It is that dear boy I am sorry for—I can raise myself if you will put the pillows. Now let me rest; a minute. . . . He is so hopeful, and kind. . . . But oh, if I got well, I should have to tell him; he would never believe me—never!"

Pitiful it was to hear her talk so. "You are very good," she went on; "I knew that I could tell you all about it; but men don't understand. . . . I did try. It hurts me sometimes, when he is talking. I smile, you know, to make up a little bit for the times I treated him badly.—My hair is troublesome; sure you don't mind? I believe I could do it myself to-day."

"Eh, my barne," the woman cried, her hands faltering, "thou'rt like one o' my awn! I'd do—" She could not say what she would willingly do.

"Yes, I know," said Barbara. "An' as for brass, I'd ware my last penny! Thou munnot talk o' that no more."

It was spoken at last with a petulant distress, a rebellion that such a reckoning should be there to keep them strangers; she intended to make the "munnot" final, and repeated it as if it were so.

"Oh, but I shall see to it," Barbara said in her quiet way. "I know he would like to pay. You will let him do that, and—and what else he does for me? You must remember," she explained, gently, "he would have married me if I had consented."

The timid soul doubted she had made too bold, and was silent.

Usually, the doctor's order that Barbara should lie with her head low had to

be followed, and then the coiffure was but loosely made, while first one patient cheek and then the other pressed the pillow. But this day she seemed to be a little stronger. So when all was done, and she had the hand mirror to scan it by—

"Ess," she said, in the tone of her baby-talk, "at's velly nice. But oo never kiss me after!"

With a motherly sweet cry—a strange cry of astonishment, deprecation, and happiness—Mrs. Shuttlewell stooped to kiss her for the first time, trembling.

But the make-believe with Enoch was daily more hard to sustain.

It had grown to a pitch of hardihood; and either he was keeping a dreadful gaiety, to hide some better knowledge of her state than Dr. Partington had let her have, or she ought not to leave him unprepared for a certain cruel shock—thinking of which, when once she had imagined it, put her in a fever of concern for him.

Barbara could have been in no doubt as to his knowledge of the doctor's opinion—her perceptions were so acute—but that Enoch had found it impossible to talk hopefully without feeling so. He had begun to stand upon the bit of firm ground that doctors can make mistakes. But she had seen through Dr. Partington from the first; and one day she disconcerted him.

"Doctor," said Barbara, lifting her eyes full upon him as he felt the pulse, "I want you to be velly truthful and sensible. When am I going to die?"

"My dear young lady!" he exclaimed. "No," said Barbara, "I want you to tell me. I am sure you have meant to be kind; if I had known how kind you were—Oh, I'm sure if I were a doctor. . . . I would tell you anything you asked; I mean if you were I."

"But, my dear," he said gently, releasing her wrist, "that is a question I really cannot answer."

"Then it may be any time."

A tide of generous blood flushed his face purple.

"Pray, pray, my dear Miss West, suffer an old man with some experience of cases like yours to express himself in his own way," he said. "You see"—he patted the wasted hand once or twice—"your case is one in which so much depends upon yourself. If you avoid excitement—"

"But, doctor, please! I have a reason; I have to make people ready," she pleaded. "If it were sudden, they would be too dreadfully upset."

There was water in the little brown eyes of the doctor, blinking under shaggy brows. He cleared his throat and blew his nose deliberately, and looked again at Barbara—and said nothing. His glance fell; he took his watch out.

Barbara thought she knew his meaning. "Never mind," she said; "I daresay you can't tell me. I knew I wasn't going to be mended. But I wish you would make it plain to Mr. Watson; will you? You know, he is very fond of me; and I don't think he—It ought to be made plain to him."

"It shall be, my dear young lady," said the doctor. "Whatever you wish me to do—and God bless you for your brave thoughtfulness."

Well; he said this very comfortably, and rose; took up his hat; laid a hand lightly on her head a moment, nodding as he withdrew it; turned half about and took a step or two; at the curtains paused; and, bowing there with an old-

fashioned courtesy, said, "Good day, my dear. Now you should close your eyes and sleep awhile. So, good day."

He stepped out backwards as if she were a princess.

"Good day, my child."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Song to Sylvia.

What seems cruel is kind sometimes. The comfortable manner of Dr. Partington must have covered in his lifetime many mistakes and omissions; and one of them was that he did not perform his promise at this crisis. He took it that Enoch had been already told enough to guide him. He might at least, you will say, have told him now that Barbara knew; but a successful doctor has always more duties than he can do quite scrupulously.

On the morrow Enoch, when he brought her flowers as usual, said, while arranging them, "Next year, you must see them growing."

She waited day after day; and, when at last she asked the gentle old humbug if he had "spoken to Mr. Watson," he thought it sufficient to say just, "Yes, my dear; you may speak to him about it whenever you feel a little better."

More flowers! He brought them almost gaily, and would have her admire them and tell him how to make them up, and where to put the vases. She closed her eyes, saying—

"Let me wait until you've done, Con. I like best to see the whole effect."

Had he known from the beginning, and hidden what he felt all along? If so, there was little comfort in it. So little that she wanted to cry. He came and sat upon the bed, and she felt him lean over her to kiss her forehead.

"The time seems long, doesn't it?" he said, and stroked her hair. "But I'm sure you're stronger. Courage, dear girl! You know, you don't have the pain you had at all."

"Oh, why do you talk like that?" she exclaimed. "It doesn't make things any better, Con."

He grew very serious, looking deep into her eyes, that she had had to open with tears in them; and he said, "You know why, Barbara. Because, whatever has happened, I love you; and I mean to have you well, and very happy."

It flushed her to a fever as she put him off.

When he had gone that day she lay thinking for a long while. Mrs. Shuttlewell watched at first uneasily, and made so many errands to the room afterwards that in the end Barbara met her with a smile.

"Yes, I do want you," she said. "I want you to sit down."

She took the nervous rough hand that began to smooth and pat the coverlet.

"I want you to do something for me, Mrs. Shuttlewell. Will you, please, tell Con all about me?"

(To be continued.)

Poetry is the "stuff of which our life is made"; for all that is worth remembering in life is the poetry of it.—HAZLITT.

We can sometimes love what we do not understand, but it is impossible completely to understand what we do not love.—MRS. JAMESON.

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is the primary cause of most of the ills to which we are subject. WHELPTON'S VEGETABLE PURIFYING PILLS arouse the stomach to action. Headache flies away, Biliousness, Kidney Disorders, and Skin Complaints disappear. Ask for WHELPTON'S PURIFYING PILLS. And remember there is NO PILL "JUST AS GOOD." By post 14 stamps. WHELPTON & SON, 4, Crane Court, LONDON, E.C.

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FELLOWSHIP. REST. RECREATION. SUSTENANCE. MEALS. No Intoxicants sold. GAMES.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS:—Real Irish Linen POCKET HANDKERCHIEFS, purest flax. Ready hemmed; corded or tape borders. Ladies' 2/6 doz.; gent.'s 3/9. Postage 3d.—HUTTON'S, 159, Larne, Ireland.

Anty Drudge's Cure for Washer-woman's Sore Hands.

Mrs. Housemother—"My hands are that tender and sore—I just dread winter coming. Mrs. Washetoo, next door, says she uses rosewater and glycerine for hers, and I am going to do the same."

Anty Drudge—"Rosewater and fiddlesticks. Your sore hands come from washing the old-fashioned way! Use Fels-Naptha soap and save your hands. No scalding water to crack the skin nor hard washboard rubbing to make your knuckles tender."

Fels-Naptha is a laundry soap, but it doesn't stop at that. It is also a way of washing clothes. The Fels-Naptha soap and the Fels-Naptha way together—wash clothes quicker, easier and better than they can be washed with any other soap, or by any other way.

The Fels-Naptha way is so easy and simple, you'd think we wouldn't have to urge it on womankind. But a good many women seem to think that Fels-Naptha is just soap, and if we didn't say something about it, they'd use it as they would use "just soap." This would be like paying someone to do the wash and then do it yourself.

Why not let Fels-Naptha do it?

Fels = Naptha
will do it. Isn't it worth trying?

THE WOMAN WORKER.
DECEMBER 2, 1908.

The Last Word.

The expected has happened, and the Court of Appeal has decided that trade union funds cannot be legally used for purposes of Parliamentary representation. The case will be taken to the House of Lords, but there is no reason to suppose that the decision will not be upheld by that abode of wisdom. Over a million and a-half trade unionists are affected, and they can be trusted to find a way out amongst them.

Really, his own class has little for which to thank Lord Justice Farwell. He was one of those responsible for the famous Taff Vale judgment, and evidently its lesson has been lost upon him. The insufferable arrogance of his class is well illustrated by the impertinence of his reply to the request of counsel for a suspension of the injunction pending an appeal.

Lord Justice Farwell and his fraternity will pay dearly one day for such studied insolence.

We do not want to drown the memory of their impertinence.

There have been many News of the queries as to what is being done by the Pioneers. There are even some impatient Pioneers.

who suggest that nothing is being done. How little these know Grotta Park! How little understand Harry Perry!

Since our Holborn reunion there have been many consultations, and now a plan of campaign has been evolved which will, I believe, do much for THE WOMAN WORKER. London Pioneers are already at work—indeed, the enthusiasm of one keen spirit in pushing the paper led to her arrest the other day. And I hope to meet them all before the end of the year at a Pioneer "At Home" for members only.

As for the provinces, in a few weeks we hope to have local groups at work all over the country.

Meantime, there are two further points. Many enthusiasts, for whose help we so joyously and spontaneously given—we can never be sufficiently grateful, have been attending meetings and pushing the paper on their own account. It is magnificent of them to do this, but we want them to enrol as Pioneers. They will make organisation easier by doing so and help the Fellowship.

The other point is that certain I.L.P. and S.D.P. branch secretaries have not yet returned reunion tickets or paid for those sold. Will they do two very eager officials the kindness to delay no longer? Mr. Perry's address is 108, Storks Road, Bermondsey.

As a result of the efforts of the Women's Trade Union League, assisted by the Chairman of the Labour Party, who is a member of the League Committee, and Mr. D. J. Shackleton, M.P., who is its treasurer, two of the Home Office Special Orders granting facilities for overwork and a variation of holidays in florists' workshops and hospital laundries in Scotland have been withdrawn. This means that the statutory holidays will still require to be observed, and in the case of florists outside and indoor work from 6 a.m. or until 10 p.m. will be, as formerly, illegal.

I regret to add, however, that the Home Secretary refused to withdraw the two exceptions allowing variations in meal times and overtime inside florists' workshops as early as six in the morning or as late as ten o'clock at night.

Women workers will be Amendment grateful to the Labour Party for the stand it made on this occasion, and for the concessions so secured, but it is intolerable that at a time when so many women are unemployed, facilities for any additional overtime whatsoever should be given.

It is to be hoped that in the near future the Factory and Workshops Act may be so amended as to take away such power from the Secretary of State for Home Affairs as is now afforded by the exception sections.

Our protest, however, has achieved much more than the mere withdrawal of two of these objectionable Orders.

We are not so likely to see a multiplication of these special exceptions now that the permanent officials at the Home Office know that there will be formidable opposition to reckon with; and the furniture firms, to whose deputation I alluded

last week, will, I think, wait in vain for an opportunity to compel further overtime from London upholstresses.

The girls in the trade are rallying in strong force to the newly-formed branch of the National Federation of Women Workers, and at an enthusiastic meeting held last week they appointed competent officials and a strong committee from their own numbers.

Hearing rumours of discontent amongst the workers in Esher employed by Messrs. Burns and Co., who style themselves "the largest bookbinders in the world," Mrs. Cheshire, the organiser of the women's section of the Printers, Warehousemen, and Cutters Union, recently arranged a meeting of the 300 women and girls concerned. Freedom of speech and right of combination would, however, appear to be still denied at Esher. On the night of the meeting, when the work-girls arrived at the hall they found the manager of the mills standing in the doorway, ready to cross-examine anyone who had the pluck to enter. Inside, his wife and daughter were seated in the front, with note-book and pencil ready. During the proceedings the daughter announced that any girl who joined the Union would be dismissed, and the mother delivered a short lecture on how times in general, and working girls' dresses in particular, had improved since she was a girl.

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Despite these sorry attempts at intimidation, a successful start in trade unionism has been made at Esher, and the firm would be well advised to bow to the inevitable.

Mrs. Cheshire informs me that although she could not discover a single trade unionist or Socialist in the district, even its darkness had been penetrated by THE WOMAN WORKER, and that our pages are read and appreciated by the women employed by this high-handed firm.

The opponents of Wage Boards have found a new, if somewhat questionable ally. In a recent issue of its "Review" the C.O.S. expresses a fear that should the findings of the Select Parliamentary Committee be embodied in legislation, the result would be to force many of the sweaters' victims out of employment altogether.

From the standpoint of this organisation the task of building up a nation of self-respecting and self-supporting men and women probably may seem undesirable. Certainly charity organisations would cease to be, were it not for the squalor and wretchedness which disgrace our national life.

The institution of a legal minimum wage in sweated industries would help to stamp out some of the conditions which call charitable institutions into being. Even if at the beginning there should be a displacement of a few miserably paid wage-earners, who are already chiefly subsidised by Poor Law relief, the gain would be far greater than the loss.

Which? Mr. H. Hamilton Fyfe sums up the situation admirably in a letter to the "Times." "Which is better," he asks, "to have a certain number of people regularly employed under proper conditions, and paid sufficiently well to enable them to live decently, or to have twice as many scrambling for work and all making a poor thing out of it? Can there be any question? Even if all the workers who are squeezed out should become a national charge, the charge would still be an advantage to the nation."

With the exercise of some legislative intelligence, many of the workers so displaced would not necessarily become a burden, but could be set to do useful and socially necessary work.

Members of the aristocracy rallied in great force the other day to the mass meeting of the Women's Anti-Suffrage League. Lords and ladies, countesses and dowager-countesses, lined the platform, all determined to resist to the last gasp any attempt to set women politically free.

The Countess of Jersey, who presided, evidently understands that the movement for women's enfranchisement has become a surging flood, and that the "anti-Suffragists" can only hope to act as a sort of dyke, vainly striving to stem the onward progress of the stream.

"I know very well," she said, "that it is more amusing to be a flood than a dyke. But we must be a dyke, and everyone who joins this movement will help to make the dyke stronger."

Wonderful! Who would seek to rob the Countess and her friends of their qualified amusement? I wonder if these fair women would find six months' imprisonment in Holloway an "amusing" experience.

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I daresay many women of title and fashion do not wish to be saddled with the duties and obligations of citizenship. Their lives are already crowded with such absorbing interests as Bridge and French novels.

And if they do not want the vote, if they cannot appreciate its value, they are welcome to leave it alone. Their attempt, however, to deny political power to their working-class sisters who so sorely need its aid if decent conditions of labour and life are to be won, is not to be tolerated.

It is safe to prophesy that the "dyke" will not long withstand the flood.

Once more the Houses of Parliament are navigating the stormy waters of the Education controversy. Many phases of the question are being eagerly debated.

Shall there be a right of entry? Must we tolerate "contracting-out"? Shall we abolish tests for teachers? And so the Parliamentary game of ping-pong proceeds. How long, I wonder, must we wait before our inspired legislators begin to discuss "the things that are more excellent"?

If the House of Commons were really in earnest about education, the terms of debate would be very different. Some

day we shall settle down to the subject, and bring tolerance and reason and common sense to bear upon it. We shall decide how best to equip each child to be a brave soldier on life's battle-field, an honourable citizen, placing social service before greed of gain. We shall deem it a shameful wrong that any child should be ill-nourished or ill-clad, dwarfed in body or mind.

We shall strive to secure for each boy and girl the Greek ideal of a beautiful mind in a beautiful body. Is not this, rather than the wrangling of rival sectarians, the real education problem?

Some day women will be enfranchised and in Parliament. I wonder if we must wait till then before that august assembly faces the true issue and begins to understand the actual needs of the nation's children.

There was an interesting sequel to the Bethnal Green dispute at the Shoreditch Police Court last Thursday, when one of the girls in the employment of Mr. J. Josephs summoned a striker, named Sarah Signal, on a charge of threatening to assault.

The complainant, herself a poor working girl, who was, strangely enough, on this occasion provided with legal assistance, stated that she went in fear of her life owing to the conduct of the defendant, and she called one witness to testify as to the nature of the language used.

Sarah Signal denied the accusation, and called four witnesses, including a policeman, to prove that she had been guilty of nothing more serious than peaceful picketing.

The complainant's solicitor stated that the strikers were supported by a trade union, and cross-examined the witnesses to try to show that they had been recommended by their advisers to molest the girls in the factory.

The insinuation was emphatically denied by all the witnesses. Despite the evidence, which was almost entirely in favour of Sarah Signal, the magistrate bound her over to keep the peace for twelve months, with a security of £5, or 50 to prison for fourteen days in default.

Too often, in such cases, to be a trade unionist is to be guilty.

MARY R. MACARTHUR.

CO-OPERATORS AND WAGES.

The Co-operative Guild Conference at Devonport last week discussed "a co-operation standard for women employees," on a paper by Mrs. Jacques, of Bristol, who claimed that equal pay for equal work is the only fair rule.

Miss M. L. Davis contributed also a paper on "The Minimum Wage Campaign: Practical Steps." She advocated warmly the enforcement of the Newport scale.

The papers were very well received, but no resolution was reached.

DAY OF PUBLICATION.

Every week "THE WOMAN WORKER" is now published so as to reach all newsagents on

WEDNESDAY.

Readers who find that they have to wait until later in the week for it should show this notice.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The publication of letters in this column is not to be understood as implying that the Editor is in sympathy with what may be said by the writers.

Letters are most likely to obtain publication when brief.

* Personal and sharply controversial letters can rarely be inserted. They lead to long replies and rejoinders, for which we cannot spare the space.

Communications intended for the paper should not be addressed to any individual by name, but only to the Sub-Editor: the individual may be absent, the official is always present.

E. R.—Good; but the rhythm is a little awkward. Many thanks for the offer.

E. B.—Sorry we have not space. It is admirable.

THOMAS DAWSON.—Thank you very much.

J. LAMBERT.—Certainly it was not wilfully done. How could you think it was? Thank you.

W. T. WYNE.—The address of the Anti-Suffrage Society is Caxton House, Tothill Street, Westminster.

J. KAY.—Thank you very much. The booklet will be useful.

M. H. D.—Your letter interests me greatly. I will reply to it as soon as I can consider the suggestions.

F. T. RING.—Will you send your address, please? It has been lost.

The Servant Problem.

Dear Editor,—I want to ask Julia Dawson if, in her discussion on the servant question, she can spare a word of sympathy for the often overworked professional wife and mother who has to keep servants that she may be free to do work other than housework? My husband is a hard-working doctor; we are obliged to live in a moderate-sized house, but every labour-saving device I can get we have. I have abolished all brass fenders, carpets, superfluous gimcracks, and done all I can to simplify domestic work. We have been married ten years. In that time we have had many maids, never keeping less than two. Some have stayed four or five years, some only as many months. But I have seldom had one from whom I could get any human sympathy, and certainly only one who took any real interest or pride in her work. I can honestly say that I try to make them happy. I pay them good wages; they have the same food, the same beds, as ourselves. I cannot help the fact that domestic service is the remains of the feudal system, and will disappear in the ideal social life.

Nor can I help it that our house is built with a basement kitchen, though I try to make it as bright and airy as possible. I have nursed the maids when they were ill, and sent them away for holidays. I have interested myself—as far as I can get their confidence at all—in their affairs, helped their friends, sent them to places of amusement—and to Suffrage meetings! They have ample leisure to read any books they like to take from my shelves—my only request being that they will replace them. I never mind their friends coming to tea, though I certainly did object when last week my husband found that one of the maids had invited a man, whose name she did not even know, to visit her at our house.

I really think I do fulfil my part of the contract. My husband and I certainly work harder than any of our servants. But I never get a housemaid who, when given charge of the linen, will really mend it, unless I constantly urge her to do it. I never get a cook who keeps her cupboards clean because she prefers them clean—she cleans them because I very occasionally look into them and grumble mildly if they are horrible mess holes.

I do not think having servants to meals with us, as one of your correspondents suggested, would help matters! My only quiet time with my busy husband would be made uncomfortable by the presence of uneducated girls, who would not really be interested in what we were talking about; and the children's grammar would become confused. Besides, we take only twenty minutes over a meal, but the servants always sit an hour, so we should not have time.

Please tell me whose fault it all is. Only it is no use saying I ought to take a flat and do all the work myself, as well as my other work, and my mothering work. My husband's practice would disappear for one thing, and then we could not live at all.

But will you tell me why, as a rule, an idle, fashionable woman gets efficient maids who wait on her hand and foot, while she treats them as if they were an entirely lower order of beings? And why a working woman who does not want to be waited on, and tries to be human and friendly, is usually despised by the ordinary domestic servant?—Yours faithfully,

WORKING WIFE.

Dear Editor,—Julia Dawson admires the methods of domestic servants who do not clamour at the doors of their mistresses, but let the latter do the clamouring; and then she goes on to advise unemployed men to follow the same tactics. Where is the logic?

Why do mistresses run after any sort of domestic servant? Because the demand is greater than the supply. Employers do not run after lady typists, clerks, companions, or other "hands," for very obvious reasons, and if mistresses had the chance, they would be more particular in their choice of domestic helps.

The trouble with the unemployment of men has entirely different causes from that of the "domestic problem"; and, despite Julia Dawson's advice, it cannot be coped with in the same manner. Why not counsel more girls to fit themselves for a domestic life—thereby leaving more places to be filled by men?

The preference for factory life must surely be because of the free evenings. Instead of encouraging this preference, let Julia Dawson first inquire how most of these free evenings are spent by the majority of these girls. Do they attend classes, or help their overburdened mothers, or make and mend their clothes, or read, or go to good, wholesome places of recreation? Compare the evenings these girls spend with those of a domestic in any well-conducted home, and the comparison is all in favour of the girls who live in.

Oh, Julia Dawson! long admired—please use your great influence in advising women not to despise the sphere in which they can be all-triumphant!—Yours sincerely,

TILLY LIPSON.

"A Bard at the Braes."

Dear Editor,—Yes, I am glad to be corrected by my correspondent from Inverness. I made a mistake about "the Clach".

The incidents in my little sketch are rearranged; thus, I put the men in prison in September, instead of in spring. But all the facts about the "Battle of the Braes" and the part played by landlord, crofters, and their friends are, I hope, quite accurate. If anything in the record is false, I would be glad to know it.

I want to show how terrible the land laws were, and also why and how it was so difficult for the Highlanders to carry out reforms. I daresay, however, I could not succeed in a short sketch like this, Highlander though I be.

M. McMILLAN.

Dear Madam—I was glad to see "Ino's" correction of Miss McMillan's statement regarding the relations between "the Clach" and John Murdoch.

"The Clach" was, I am afraid, a time-serving politician, and not over-scrupulous at that. It was in this connection that the incident which I presume "Ino" refers to occurred. No weapon was too mean for him to use against Murdoch, who sacrificed everything to the cause of the Highland people.

When other gifted people made a competency and retired, they generally fawned upon the rich—Lord Nobody or some political party. Not so John Murdoch. On his return from the Civil Service he started the "Highlander" newspaper, expressly to advocate the cause of the downtrodden crofters of the Highlands and Islands, who were suffering grievous wrongs at the hands of Highland lairds.

On one eventful evening a terrible storm broke out in the Uig district of Skye. Rivers forsook their courses and converged on the mansion of a then notorious proprietor, sweeping it away; the local factor, who happened

to be staying there that night, being drowned. Pasture and arable lands were rooted up and bridges carried away. Even the village graveyard was devastated, the coffins exposed, and human remains carried out to sea.

Murdoch, in a leading article next day, described the destruction as a "visitation from Heaven" to punish the landlord for his persecution of the crofters. An action at law for libel followed. Murdoch was mulct in expenses to the tune of £100. Unaided, he could not go on, and as no one was patriotic enough to come to his assistance, the "Highlander" became defunct.

But Murdoch's zeal in the cause of Highland land law and social reform was undaunted. A truer friend the Highland people never had. We have raised monuments to Highlandmen, but to none who served his race and country with greater devotion than John Murdoch; yet his last resting-place, I believe, is known to few.—Yours sincerely,

A. M.

Teachers' Chances.

Dear Madam.—Many working class girls have gained Scholarships entitling them to an extended course of education at a superior school. Some of them are thinking of becoming pupil teachers. Are they aware of the fact that things are not so rosy in the scholastic profession as many people would have them believe?

Influence, kudos, and local popularity, apart from success in the class room, are the things that matter.

"The way to advancement," as Mr. Russel Smart tells us in the "Socialist Review," "is through social interest." And one may well want to know whether the child of a working man can successfully compete with the child of a doctor, a parson, a borough councillor, or any other local magnate.

But, in any case, the names of a large number of married women appear in the promotion list recently issued by the London County Council.

No doubt it is very nice for a class mistress, and in many cases a head mistress, to have a husband earning £200 or £300 a year in the same profession, and perhaps in the same school. But what about the single girls out of employment? Some of them have well-to-do parents and influential friends, it is true.

Even then they have as much right to be and feel independent as the mistress who remains at school after being married. But suppose, on the other hand, their friends are poor, and their parents are struggling for a bare existence. Why should they be ousted from their own profession through the selfishness and greed of others?

"You can guess why I do not want to be a teacher," said a young friend of mine, the daughter of a schoolmaster who is well acquainted with what goes on behind the scenes. "If all that father says is true, I would sooner go and work in a factory."

A WORKING MAN.

Upton Park.

SOCIALIST SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The sixth half-yearly conference of the Lancashire and Cheshire Socialist Sunday School Union was held on Saturday, November 21, at the Central Hall, Stockport; Comrade C. Glithero in the chair. Delegates were present representing seventeen schools. The secretary stated that four new schools had been affiliated during the year, and that reports from the schools were very encouraging.

The following important resolutions were carried unanimously: (1) That the time is now ripe for the formation of a National Union, composed of delegates from every Socialist Sunday School Union; (2) that we urge the pressing need of a large national hymn book with words and tunes combined.

At the evening meeting Miss Margaret Bondfield gave an inspiring address on "How to Train the Citizen of the Future." The discussion was full of interest.

OUR PRIZE PAGE.

Bad Minutes.

There are times in the lives of all of us when we wish we had not been brought into the world; or, being here, we should dearly love to sink through the floor or clothe ourselves in an invisible garment. We most of us can look back upon five minutes unenjoyed, five minutes that will never be forgotten while we have a brain to think with or a soul to feel. They may have been comic, side-splitting minutes to on-lookers; may have provided mirth for many jovial people; but to us, the principal actors in the little play, how awful have they proved!

Oh, reader, what are the worst five minutes you ever spent? Do not tell us of fear or grief: this page must not be unhappy. Tell us of times that may make us wonder, exclaim, laugh, or even say, "Tut, tut! Can't believe that!" But do not cause our blood to freeze or our tears to flow.

The worst five minutes must not exceed 200 words in the telling. One guinea will be the prize. Send to the Prize Editor, Utopia Press, 44, Worship Street, E.C., and do not be later than Tuesday morning.

IDEAL SCHOOLS.

We know it is our fault we omitted the number of words allowed for this competition, but, dear people, you know the size of the Prize Page. Then why send essays a thousand words in length—almost? However, we forgive you—for our fault—and we here put before you for your amusement and instruction various letters on "School as it Should Be," starting with

THE PRIZE LETTER.

An ideal school! That seems a paradox. They are so terribly realistic to the little mortals of to-day.

It would mean revolution. The Education Committees would need to be replaced by sensible, practical women. What do men know about children? They have planned the education code. Let them come and apply it to seventy or eighty wriggling bits of humanity.

The school buildings would need to be re-erected. Let them be built within sight and sound of the country, with playing fields and gardens, baths, and gymnasium. Fill them with plants, and flowers, and pictures, and objects of interest. Let the one end and aim be the development of the child; whatever will tend to this, let it be introduced and utilised in the school.

The children should have liberty to develop, each according to its own individuality, with the teacher to guide and direct. They should be taught to observe the things around them, and be encouraged to express their own impressions of these things. They should learn to sing and draw, and play out in the fields. They should go into the woods and lanes, and study the ways of the wild things there.

Thus would their school life be healthy and happy.—C. S., Chesterfield.

An Ideal Education.

The Education question occupies public attention to-day: the Education faddist is abroad; the minds of philosophers and thinkers are concerned with the solution of this problem, yet a broad and varied experience of elementary and secondary schools produces the opinion that the whole system of public education to-day is a gigantic farce.

I would have the first part of a child's education carried on at home, until he is nine, say. Let the idea of the slow and natural development of his faculties be predominant, give information only when it is asked for, allow no interest to be forced, but be ready to take prompt advantage of signs of awakening in any direction. Give the child drawing materials when he is found using anything which will make a mark. Let him learn to read or write when he expresses a desire to do so. Above all, do not teach, do not have a "system," and do not allow anything to take precedence of his full and free physical development.

When choosing a school, I would have the question of the likely effect on character considered first. I do not desire to place any premium on weak and ineffective teaching, but I would emphasise the fact that the mental and moral stimulus derived from a high "tone" in the school is the most important factor in school life.

Next note opportunities for the proper continuation of physical development, gymnastics and outdoor sports for boys, but for girls (am I old-fashioned?) I prefer calisthenics and dancing. We are paying too big a price for our girls' excellence in hockey, etc., in the loss of grace, self-possession, and dignity.

Beware of the school whose "be-all" and "end-all" is success in "exams." In such a hot-house the child's whole education is often ruthlessly sacrificed by the mechanical preparation necessary for such tests. The memorising of facts takes the place of training in the art of expression, and the student no longer really learns science or history, but he learns the altogether distinct art of answering examination questions, a totally useless branch of study.

Let me conclude with the words of a living educationist: "It matters little what subjects are taught in schools, so long as the teacher communicates his enthusiasm for learning to the scholar."—SANDY.

Examinations, Avaunt!

The school of the past is abolished. The barrack-like building, wedged in between dingy houses or sooty factories, has given place to an artistic structure in the midst of open country or of a large park such as all the cities of the Socialist State possess.

Upon entering the building, we notice the absence of dilapidated maps and diagrams, whose place upon the walls has been taken by the best pictures that social wealth can supply. But these changes, great in themselves, are of small account compared with the change of spirit that has entered into the whole organisation of the school. Its aims and methods have been revolutionised.

Crowded classes of seventy scholars, many of them in charge of teachers who had had no real training for the work, have given place to classes of fifteen, and the teachers are all men and women whose training has been the chief care of an enlightened Board of Education. Examinations have ceased to be, for we no longer ask how much has been crammed into the child, but whether a love of truth and right has been imparted to it, and these things cannot be measured by rule. And so the curriculum has become simple and elastic; a course of literature, nature study, and handicraft for every child, so used as to develop all the faculties; and then a more specialised course, suited to the capacity of the individual, and combined with some practical work, adding not only to the resources and independence of the scholar, but also to the real wealth of the community.—S. J. H., Ipswich.

An Established Fact.

Seeing the heading for a prize, I asked my little girl if she would as soon go to school as to the sweet shop, and she said, "Yes." The school in question belongs to a University in a Northern town, and full particulars given, if wanted is full of ideals. The lovely old house is situated in plenty of ground, and each child has a garden, and learns botany from actual contact with flowers. The classes are small, and do not exceed twelve in number, and each child is studied in every way. The parents and teachers meet in friendly intercourse each term, and if any parent does not think the child is making the outward progress he or she could wish, their complaints are listened to, and the professor who is over all just asks us for patience, and then he explains the different methods they work on.

There has not been a care on the face of our child. She has had fairy tales read in her younger days and loves to read them now, and has been taught to handle a paint brush freely and paint right from Nature. In summer the whole school adjourn to the country for a fortnight, and learns to get at the heart of things. They weave baskets in the open, sing every day, help to bring the water, and in turns wait on each other. In fact, the spirit of helpfulness and fraternity animates all. The whole staff from the college give their lessons in the school, and by-and-by the best teachers come into the school as resident teachers. They take the little girls to the places of beauty and interest in the city, and try to make good citizens of them. All this in school hours, too, and at as little expense as possible.—ANON.

Find the Highest.

The child's future relation to father, mother, civil society, and mankind, to Nature, and God may depend on the modes of its life in childhood. Therefore, how much depends on the homes and schools of our land.

Of course, the influence of "Home" is the greatest, and we do well to raise the standard of home-life, but schools can do much.

Let our schools be after the pattern of an ideal home, and the teaching such as a mother—a true mother—would instinctively give. Let us tenderly and lovingly unfold that divine something which is born in every child.

We cannot put in what the child needs: whatever it will one day become is in it, and must be brought out. Children should be led early to reflect. Our part is to interpret what is left when the child has worked out all it can. An imperfect answer found by the child itself is more valuable than half understanding a grown-up explanation. Let us be patient with its questions, its continual questioning.

Help to find the answer. With every cross, repelling word we destroy a bud, a shoot of its life tree. Childish destroying means observation and experiment; also, play is a means of child training. Games not only strengthen the body; they nourish mental and moral forces. Think of the courage, self-control, endurance, justice, needed in the playing of a good game. Also the fairness, patience, and encouragement to the weaker ones.

With rhythmical movement and sound we can foster measure and order in action, conduct, movement, and by-and-by a finer taste will develop for music, art, nature, poetry.

"To raise activity of will into firmness to mould and animate a pure, firm, and enduring will, so as to realise and practise genuine humanity, is the chief aim and final goal."

We needs must love the highest when we see it. Then let our schools be such that when the youth or maiden leaves them to face the world, he or she has at least some knowledge of the highest.—ETHEL RICHARDSON.

A HAPPY SEASIDE HOME

Together with a sound general education, including conversational French and German, offered to a few children under twelve. Closer care and more effective tuition for backward or delicate children than in large schools. Home comforts and perfect family life. Plenty of outdoor exercise in a climate strongly recommended by doctors. Entire charge of children from abroad. Terms moderate. References to parents of former and present pupils; also to the "Clarion" Board.—Miss C. M. THOMPSON, Lightburne Avenue, St. Annes-on-Sea, near Blackpool.

THE EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

Conducted by Pandora.

JOURNALISM.—I.

Two of my correspondents ask me to give them "true practical advice, not fairy tales," about journalism, and to the very best of my ability I will do so.

I cannot encourage the well-educated, sensitive girl to go in for journalism. It is not like teaching, where, once thoroughly well qualified, you are sure to get a berth which you will keep unless you are slack or indiscreet, or misbehave yourself. I have known women journalists of fifteen years' standing who have been seven or eight years on a paper, earning £200 or £300 a year, find themselves one fine morning with "out of work" facing them at the expiration of a month. The paper has changed hands, or expenses have to be cut down, or, worse still, the editor's sister or aunt wishes to do dramatic or literary work, and the bread-winning journalist has to make way for her.

In no trade or profession in this world are there so many "bread-snatchers"—well-to-do women, who want to make more money—as in journalism.

But both my inquirers are real bread-winners, earning money in the overcrowded labour market because they must—the sole reason that should drive a woman into the labour market to-day—that is to say, if she does not want to increase the sum of misery in this world by taking the job and the bread of the real wage-earner.

Do not believe the fables going in some quarters about a few "fashion pars," bringing you in an income. Very highly-placed women in "Society" can earn a big income by just supplying bits of fashionable news; but for most of us, fortunately—for I cannot conceive of any more degrading work than that of the aristocratic lady retailing "society gossip"—there is no such means. You must, then, from the start, make up your mind what sort of a journalist you will be.

Can Journalism be Taught?

Yes and no. There is a natural aptitude, an inborn intuitive journalistic faculty, which cannot be taught, which you either have or have not. Most persons, anyway most women, have it, for journalism of the modern every-day sort does not demand very high intelligence. And, on the other hand, a good deal can be taught, and much heart-breaking failure and disappointment saved. But I do not advise any girl to go to any of the so-called "schools of journalism," in spite of "Truth's" recommendation. The best help of the kind is a course of practical journalism given by one of the cleverest of the women journalists. Her pupils are given actual practice, and they do excellently. But the fee is £6 6s.; and for those who cannot afford this, perhaps these practical hints may be found useful.

Shorthand.

Supposing you are a girl of 19, and have just left school, and journalism attracts you. Ought you to learn shorthand and typing?

I do not advise either, unless you want to devote yourself permanently to verbatim reporting. This is hard and not very agreeable work; but it is very likely that a woman could get a fairly good post after a few years if she took it up as a speciality. There are scientific meetings to be reported, sermons, congresses, specifically women's meetings, and so forth. And no doubt a very first-class verbatim reporter could earn £3 or £4 a week after she was thoroughly qualified. But here the competition of the men who know shorthand is felt, and it is a matter for very careful consideration.

For ordinary reports shorthand is not required.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL GYMNASTICS (BETTY).—There is plenty of work for the well-trained gymnastic teacher who, before she takes up medical gymnastics only, should have experience as a class teacher, where she gets to know the physique of the normal girl. But I do not think £100 would pay for your training at a really good college—Madame Bergmann's, or Miss Stanfeld's, at Bedford. It is a two years' course, and the fees amount to between £80 and £90 yearly. It is a little difficult to advise you what to train for, as you give no indication of your tastes. However, I believe that if a woman is in good health and is intelligent and active, there is good work to be got as a nurse or as a highly qualified corresponding clerk. The County Council are now employing school nurses, and in the future a large number is sure to be appointed. You should get three years' training in a good hospital, and then you would be eligible for such an appointment. The work is very interesting, and salary quite enough to live upon. If you know French and German at all, it would be worth your while to learn these languages commercially, so that you could conduct the foreign correspondence of a business house, and in that case the salary would be a good one. If you will write to me again and give me some personal information, I shall be able to give you some more helpful advice.

PREPARATION FOR COLONIAL LIFE (FIANCEE).—It is really most important that you should prepare yourself for your future life, as I assure you the ordinary suburban life is not a good introduction to it. There will be un-dreamt-of hardships of all kinds, and it would be of great advantage to you to know something of what you had to look forward to. At Swanley there is a Colonial course which is very practical; at Arlesey, Hitchin, there is a Colonial College for Ladies, where the ordinary course is one year, but I think you could go for a shorter time by arrangement with the principal, Miss Turner, F.R.H.S.

MOTHER'S HELP OR NURSERY GOVERNESS (M. G.).—I am sending your name to two ladies who require a sensible woman to help them in the management of a small house and a small child. If they are not already suited they will write to you.

SCHOOL INSPECTORSHIPS (HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER).—These posts are most coveted, and are regarded as the prizes of the profession. Consequently, they are extremely difficult to get, and unless you have some special qualifications or influence, I cannot hold out much chance of your getting such work under the Board of Education. Some of the County Councils appoint women inspectors, so you should watch educational advertisements carefully. If you could write a striking article on an educational subject, you would have more chance of getting this work for which your "soul longeth."

(Remainder of Answers next week.)

Talks with the Doctor.

LORNA.—Your symptoms are those common at this stage, and will pass away. The best treatment is to keep yourself well as far as possible by attention to general hygiene and diet, with special medical treatment for any special troubles. For the rest it is wise to take a certain amount of disturbance (of any kind, ear, neuralgic, or what not) for granted, and ignore it. Avoid worrying, at all costs.

MERE MAN.—Give up drinking tea and coffee altogether for the present; give up drinking any fluid (including soup) at meal times. Do not allow yourself to get at all constipated. Eat slowly, and drink freely of water between meals: an hour and a half from a meal or to a meal is a good time. If the attacks continue, let me know.

A. A. (Weaste).—Your case is one which needs a nerve specialist to deal with it. You had better arrange through your local doctor to see a specialist in Manchester privately, and pay him his fee. The hospital doctors are usually overworked, with the result, as you say, of inefficient treatment; but a specialist able to devote some little time to the study of your case might be able to suggest something alleviating. Is there any injury of the nose or discharge from the nose? What is your age? Let me know these things, please. The specialist's fee should be 21s.

W. P.—Piles and appendicitis are two of the last things to think of in connection with a child of 2½, with the symptoms you detail. It is quite useless consulting chemists as a rule; you had better take the child to a doctor, and keep it under the doctor until well. You can, however, try the effect of mild laxatives first. Californian Syrup of Figs and confection of senna are both useful.

BILLY.—Try prescription advised last week for a similar case. Very much depends on the care of the health. If you are not well in any way, write to me, and I will advise you on that matter. Falling hair may be, and often is, merely a symptom of general bad health. **NELLIE.**—See answer to "Mere Man." Do you eat enough? Many vegetarians do not. Will you let me have your diet in greater detail? Write in a fortnight, when you will be able to judge of the effect of leaving off tea and coffee. X. Y. Z.

THE UNEMPLOYED IN BERLIN.

WHEN it was suggested in Berlin that a census of the unemployed should be taken, the Socialists declared that the only way to make it effective was by means of a house-to-house visitation. The authorities disdained this advice, and a personal voluntary system of registration was adopted, which necessarily proved ridiculously incomplete. Consequently out of forty thousand unemployed who voluntarily registered, there were only seventeen hundred women! As a matter of fact, it is known that the number is at least five thousand.

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THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

About Letters.

In the Far-away when I was a child, I often found amusement—and also much cause for wonderment—in the "Answers to Correspondents" of the grown-ups' papers.

Queer-ists.

What to eat! What to wear! How to enter a room! What to think, and feel, and be, and do, under any and all circumstances. "Mary" sought the advice of a far-away Edith as to which of two gentlemen she should marry. And "John," too stupid to find out for himself whether he preferred Mary or Grace, asked a stranger to all three to make up his mind for him.

And I read scornfully, knowing that, though I might sometimes be a little uncertain in choosing between two dolls, and might consult my mother or the little girl friend who was an expert in doll-choosing, yet I should never dream of writing to the hundred-miles-away Edith of the "Know-All," or the "Lucky-Packet," to ask, "Would you consider a brown-eyed or a blue-eyed dolly the more suitable for a little girl with straight hair, who has been vaccinated and had measles twice?"

Were grown-ups really so foolish? I wondered; and in the end I decided that the "correspondent" was an invention for the filling of space. Like the lady who scoffed at Sairey Gamp's "Mrs. Harris," I said, "There ain't no sich person."

I have learnt since that "correspondents" do exist. And I often pity the answerers. But—Oh, my dears! What a task would be theirs if the questioners were all children!

Answering grown-ups—if one knows little or nothing about the question, one says, "You may do this," "You might do that, or perhaps the other," and concludes, "Your own good sense and the refined feeling displayed in your charming letter will guide you better than any advice of mine as to what to do under the circumstances named." And the flattered questioner is too well pleased to notice that her question is not answered at all.

But children want answers—straight and direct, with no nonsense about them.

Silken Glove or "Mailed Fist!"

Suppose, now, this were an "Answer to Correspondents" page for you, dears. Tommy Snooks, having heard, or read, "If thine enemy take thy coat, give him thy cloak also," may write: "If, when we are having a game, Johnnie Jones sneaks my best glass alley, should I tell him to keep it, and offer him another, or should I bang him in the eye?"

If I answered: "It is wicked and unbrotherly to bang a fellow-creature's eye, and should not be done under any circumstances," his father might say, "H'm! that Peg woman may be all right for girls, but we don't want our boys making molly-coddles. Let 'em fight it out." And if I wrote: "It would be very wrong indeed for Johnnie to sneak your glass alley, and he would quite deserve

a bang in the eye"—well, I should expect a letter from Tommy's mother the very next day: "Your column is quite unfit for a respectable family paper. If you had to be constantly answering the door to excited neighbours coming to complain, you would know my Tommy needs no encouragement in banging eyes."

A Soft Answer—and Wrath!

But suppose I modelled my answer to Tommy on some of those to grown-ups: "Force should never be used where it can possibly be avoided. The better way would be to point out to Johnnie what sometimes happens to 'him what prigs what isn't his'n,' and to request him, firmly but politely, to restore your property. But I can trust to your own good sense, and good feeling, dear, as shown in your charming letter, to decide for you whether the bang in the eye is really necessary."

Tommy, I fear, would throw down the paper in disgust, with, "Well! I'll be jiggered! If she can't give a feller a plain answer what does she ask a feller to put questions for? I'm jolly glad I banged Johnnie Jones's eye before I wrote."

Beauty or Duty?

And little Betty Brooks might ask: "Should little girls care only about being good, and never mind being pretty?" I might answer, as did my teachers of Long-ago, "Only goodness matters. 'Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain!' 'Handsome is as handsome does!' 'Beauty is only skin deep!'"

Plain little Betty, wishing she were as pretty as Rose, whose curly locks and dimpled rosinness win for her such love and caressing, would be neither convinced nor comforted. Her dear little tip-tilted nose would be tilted still higher, and she would say, as I did: "It's all very well talking. But handsome doing will not make straight hair curly."

Picaninny Puzzlers.

And though what I could say would fill a page, Betty would still be un—or dissatisfied.

And the tiny tots!
"What does the Man in the Moon do when his house gets littler and littler?"
"Have the twinkle stars been naughty the nights they're kept in?"

And how could one answer the small boy who—thinking of what had often brought him reproof—as he looked through a series of battle pictures asked, "What for can't lickle boys kill flies if big peoples can kill other peoples?"

All this because this week I wish to put in some correspondence.

And the first place must be given to Lucy Marks, who, having waited so long, will, I fear, be thinking Peg neither kind nor courteous. Lucy says, "Would you please allow me to write to you weekly, and send me instructions what to write about?"

Dear, Peg is always glad to hear from her children on any subject which in-

terests them. But were she to reply by post to all letters received through her page, there would be no time for the page. And then—there being no page—your letters would stop; and she would be in worse case than "poor Robin" when "the North wind doth blow!"

Oh, what would your Peggy do then, poor thing!

What could she do then, poor thing?

But lay down her pen.

And weep in her den—

With no chicks to take under her wing, poor thing!

No longer to life would she cling.

Roses—

Place now for Ethel!

Do you know the old German legend of the Christ-child, dears? How he flits through the towns and villages peeping in at doors and windows, himself invisible, giving a healing touch or a hopeful thought to those who grieve or suffer?

Peg was sorrowing the other day; and as she read Ethel's sweet little letter with its lovely "secret," she felt that truly the Christ-child had visited her. But, as Ethel says, "For goodness' sake don't show this to anyone," I must obey, and will give only the few extracts which I think she will not mind:

I go journeys on thought-trains very often, perhaps too often. I can think lovely thoughts but I cannot describe them. As a man once said, "We are all poets if we could but speak our thoughts!"

Ethel then expresses her pleasure in the lovely poems sent for our competition, and goes on:

I love to read your Page, and look forward to it all the week.

And what she says next, she tells me, is a "great secret." I wish all secrets were so sweet and helpful.

—And Rue!

But our Poetry Competition brings a rather distressing "grown-up" letter:

I can scarcely believe that "Dark" is a child's work. The idea is too grown-up, and the diction too faultless. I know what my girls thought, by their faces. I know it is difficult to judge; but it discourages others so, and children have a good idea both of their own capability and that of others of their ages.

My dears, I wish to discourage none, but prizes offered for the best must be so awarded, and in this case there was no difficulty in judging. I thought Nellie Normington's poems very remarkable, but I did not dream of suspecting one of my little readers of the deceit suggested in that letter. And if "Dark" is not a child's work, then a grown-up must have aided the deception. Surely the girls whose "faces showed what they thought" can not think that in no single instance may capability be above the average.

With Nellie's poems came this letter:

Dear Peg,—Though till now I have never sent you anything, but have remained in the background, yet I am still one of your children, who follow you in wonder through fairy-land, and into the parlour where the pig reclines. I love writing poetry. If I win please may I have William Morris's "Poems by the Way"? The pieces enclosed are two of my shortest. I have a great many, for I never feel happier than when writing a poem. Your loving reader,
NELLIE NORMINGTON.

Well! I have sent Nellie the book she asks for. Peg.

HOME NOTES.

By Dorothy Worrall.

Are you all starting to clean down for Christmas? Sweeping crannies and corners, weeding out rubbish? O, this dreadful cleaning down! We are at it more or less every day, and as if that were not enough, must have a special upheaval for Christmas, Easter, and other what we call high-days and holidays. Holidays, indeed! To how many working housewives is Christmas a holiday?

This extra cleaning down on what should be a holiday is simply a

Bad Habit,

which can only be checked by having more sensible houses and more sensible fixings within them. Fixings, mind. American though it may be, I like the word for furnishings. It suggests things fixed which do not have to be moved out and swept behind, like our silly kitchen dressers.

We pride ourselves on being progressive. Yet nearly everything in our homes has to be moved and swept behind, and we still stick to drawing-rooms and draperies.

Suppose we build a castle in the air and compare it for a moment with what an ironical writer once termed the Englishman's (why not woman's?) "castle" on earth.

Oh, I would have a roomy, airy castle built if I could. If my means were small and I could not have a big "castle," then I would have one as big as ever it could be, and as airy. I would not let anyone come and cut.

One Decent Room

into two, for instance, so that only one half could be useful and the other merely "ornamental." Ornaments are so often horriblements. Nasty, ugly, dusty little things of impossible shapes and colours, only put up to be knocked down.

My idea of a home is more restful and roomful. Hooks and crooks and nicks and nooks which merely harbour dust are anathema. Which is a big word and does not sound like me. I only hope it is spelt right.

So, I would abolish all long passages and all unuseful places which cut off a single inch from the size of rooms.

The only room not used every day for human life and work should be one to store boxes in and other things only used occasionally. Which very few small houses have now. Hence a girl's dress-basket has to stand at the foot of her bed dressed like an ottoman, and her brother's portmanteau gets kicked under the bed.

I would have one large living-room for all purposes except cooking and washing up. This part of the housework should be done in a combined kitchen and scullery just off the living-room, with a serving-hatch in the dividing wall to save steps.

And I would have splendid floors. Splendid! Splendid windows! Splendid doors! Windows should be made to give light and air when open, and light only when shut. Doors that open and shut respectively, and not do both at the same time and let draughts in. Floors that fit so well that neither dust nor draught can come up between

the crevices, and look better bare than covered with cheap carpets.

I would have such good floors as could wait years till I could buy a

Carpet Beautiful,

if necessary, and never need look once ashamed of themselves.

Nor would I have such an awful lot of steps and stairs as we endure now. Made, as far as I can see, mostly for the pleasure of making us go up and down. We younger folk are not so much afflicted with these, though, as our mothers and grandmothers were. In the house where I was born there were steps up to the front door; steps down into the kitchens, and steps out of those again up into the back garden, which took two hours to clean every time, to say nothing of the way in which they wore out our poor feet. I wonder we have any feet, really. Good job we left that house.

Two floors are enough for anybody, and so is one flight of stairs. There is plenty of land, and why should we delve down into the earth to make cellars or climb up to the sky for attics? Landlordism is the real

Root of the House-Evil.

Then there should be plenty of cupboards for everything, including one which is heated by the cistern and big enough to hold and keep aired all body and bed linen.

Washstands with "ornamental" jugs and basins in bedrooms are dreadful things which make work and are ugly to see, and really not useful. If you have to go to the bath-room to bath, why not complete your ablutions there and save all the slop in the sleeping chambers?

But that brings me almost to furniture. A subject I tremble to touch on, because my girl friends all say my ideas are queer. So we will to

Recipes.

This is the time of chestnuts, and I am sure you will like my way of cooking them.

CHESTNUT STEW.—1lb chestnuts, 1oz butter, 1 tablespoonful flour, 1 pint milk, 1 yolk egg, 1 tablespoonful chopped parsley, pepper and salt. Boil chestnuts for 1 hour, then place in a hot oven for five minutes, when the skins will be quite easy to remove. Put butter into a saucepan and fry chestnuts a few minutes. Stir in the flour, add milk gradually, with pepper and salt. Let it simmer for half-an-hour. Just before serving add parsley and the yolk of egg if richness is required, but in this case do not let it boil again.—DOROTHY.

Mrs. E. L. Turner, Horntye Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, has won the 5s. prize for her **VEGETABLE PIE** recipe.

Please vote for the best of the following recipes:

DATE PUDDING.—1lb dates, pennyworth suet, 4 or 5 tablespoonfuls of flour, a pinch of salt, 2 teaspoonfuls of baking powder, and about 2 tablespoonfuls of milk. Mix flour, salt, baking powder in a basin, add suet well chopped or grated, and the dates after stoning and cutting into small pieces; moisten with the milk, and boil in a cloth 1½ hours.—No. 19.

A FRENCH WAY OF SERVING CARROTS.—Boil until tender, mince finely. Add some chopped parsley, a spoonful of milk or cream, a little butter, seasoning. Heat up a few minutes. Dish at once.—No. 20.

MOCK HARE SOUP.—Take 4lb of neck end of beef, 1 large onion pricked with cloves, cover over with water. Put in oven overnight; stew gently. Strain next morning. Add 2 tablespoonfuls of flour, 2oz butter mixed into paste. Put back into oven to thicken. Flavour with port wine or porter to suit taste. Can be eaten with black currant jelly if preferred.—No. 21.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mrs. SEALY.—Julia Dawson's recipe for Christmas Pudding is as follows: 1lb each stoned raisins, currants, mixed peel, suet, or butter, 1½lb wholemeal bread crumbs, 4 table-spoons self-raising flour, 6 new-laid eggs, 1 bottle stout, 1 grated nutmeg, 1lb Demarara sugar, 1 pinch salt. Boil 3 hours.

WOMAN WORKER.—I have not received any recipe saying the way to put soft and hard icing on cakes. Perhaps the reason of the icing not staying on the cake is that it is made too thin, too much white of egg in it. I may get some recipes for icing, and the way to put it on, and will insert them.

A 5s. prize is given every week to the sender of the recipe which obtains the most votes. Recipes and votes should be addressed to DOROTHY WORRALL, Office of THE WOMAN WORKER, Utopia Press, Workshop Street, London, and should reach the office not later than Monday morning.

The most brutal man cannot live in constant association with a strong female influence and not be greatly controlled by it.—Mrs. STOWE.

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THE PENSIONS ACT.

How Applicants Are Baffled.

To the Editor of THE WOMAN WORKER.

MADAM,—Up and down the country two thousand pension sub-committees are deciding the claims of applicants to Old Age Pensions. From information received from different parts of the country, it appears that very many points of difficulty have already arisen; and that these are being decided by pension sub-committees and committees in very diverse ways. The pension officers themselves, notwithstanding their elaborate book of instructions which the Government conveys from us, are deciding claims in quite opposite ways in different districts.

What appears urgent, if many of the claimants are not to die before their cases are decided, is that every disputed point should be instantly raised by way of appeal. And we must not throw the onus of appeal on the poor old folk, who have not the means, the skill, or the knowledge for it.

The Executive Committee of the Fabian Society, therefore, suggests, to the 18,000 members of the pension sub-committees and committees, that they ought to decide against the pension officer in every case in which there is a point which needs to be settled by appeal, in order that he may be able promptly to get an authoritative decision which will clear up the matter.

Among the points of dispute already reported to the Fabian Society—points decided against the applicant in many cases, though in other districts he has rightly been given the benefit of the doubt—are the following:

I. INCOME.

There is no authoritative definition yet of what may be included as income. If (as appears to be the better opinion) the definition of the Income Tax Acts should be followed, there ought not to be included as income—

- Voluntary gifts or allowances of any kind. (Unless there is a legally binding engagement to give them, they are not income.)
- Board.
- Lodging. This, too, is not income for purposes of the Income Tax Acts, unless there is a separate occupation of a distinctly assessed tenement.
- Temporary receipts. Only the amount actually received in the year may be reckoned (e.g., £1 per week, for six months only, does not disqualify).
- Husband or wife's income. Here the better opinion seems to be that the joint income should be divided by two. Thus, if the husband has £40 a year and the wife nothing, both are probably entitled to pension.
- Furniture. A percentage (which ought not to be more than 4 per cent.) on the value in excess of £30 should alone be taken.
- Money in Saving Bank. It has been claimed that the applicant should be held to be bound to invest this more profitably than at 2½ per cent.; or even that what he

could get by sinking it in an annuity should be reckoned; there is no legal warrant for these suggestions. Only the interest actually earned may be taken.

- Allowances from friendly societies. Some pension officers are claiming to take these at their gross amount; and are not allowing (as they should do) the weekly contributions to be deducted.

II. DISQUALIFICATION BY RECEIPT OF POOR RELIEF SINCE JANUARY 1, 1908.

On this merely temporary disqualification, which is only to last until December 31, 1910, there are a whole crop of points in doubt, on which the pension officer should be enabled to appeal to the Local Government Board.

- Husband entitled to pension, but for the fact that his wife has had poor relief (doubtful).
- Wife entitled to pension, but for the fact that the husband has received poor relief. This case should be certainly given in favour of the applicant.
- Applicant has had poor relief, but has repaid it.
- Applicant held by pension officer to be disqualified merely because he has entered the workhouse. This is not a valid ground for disqualification; the poor relief must be stated not to be medical relief.
- Applicant entered the Poor Law infirmary or the workhouse, by order of the district medical officer, in order to be treated for some ailment; and left the institution as soon as cured. This is certainly medical relief only.
- Applicant carried into workhouse suffering from accident; and left as soon as cured. This is certainly medical relief.
- (In Scotland) applicant was admitted to the poorhouse on certificate by the parish doctor that he was suffering from a complaint. It is very doubtful whether, in Scotland, all such admissions are not legally included under medical relief.
- Applicant was sent by Board of Guardians to a voluntary hospital for treatment, and a payment made for him out of the poor rate. This is probably medical relief.

III. DISQUALIFICATION BY MARRIAGE.

- Applicant, a woman English-born, has married an unnaturalised alien. Held to be disqualified; though in Australia her right to a pension under similar circumstances is allowed. The case should be raised on appeal.
- Englishwoman, herself always resident in England, has married an Australian-born man, who came to England only ten years ago. She is qualified for a pension.

In all such cases let the pension officer appeal!—I am, yours faithfully,
EDWARD R. PEASE,
Secretary, Fabian Society.

Complaints and the Law.

The absurd position of married women at law is well illustrated in the answer to "Betrothed's" question below.

The root of the evil is the old principle of common law that a husband and wife are *one*.

It will be the business of woman workers (when they get the vote) to see that a law is introduced making a husband and wife *two*!

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BETROTHED.—The Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Act, 1907, states that a woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from being elected a councillor or alderman of the council of any county or borough (including a metropolitan borough). This, at first sight, appears to be clear. But by Section 11 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1862, a person is not qualified to be elected a councillor unless enrolled or entitled to be enrolled as a burgess, and in the case of Queen v. Harrald (1872, 7 Q.B. 761) it was decided that a married woman could not properly be on the burgess roll because, at common law, a married woman's status was so merged in that of her husband that she did not have a separate existence for the purpose of a vote. The result seems to be that, because the Act of 1907 does not expressly state that a married woman can be on the burgess roll, a married woman cannot sit on a County Council or a Borough Council outside London (where the Councils are regulated by a different Act). This point was raised in the House of Commons while the Act of 1907 was under consideration, and an amendment was moved in committee, but afterwards withdrawn. There seems to have been some danger of wrecking the whole Bill if the point was pressed, and no way of getting over the difficulty satisfactory to all parties could be

(Continued on page 676.)

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devised. As regards guardians, anybody (man or woman, married or not) is eligible, provided he or she is either a parochial elector, or has resided in the union for twelve months, or (if the union is in a borough) is eligible as a councillor.

STEELE (Preston).—The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897 required the workman to make a claim for compensation within six months of the accident. If you wrote to your employers originally to claim compensation, or if you can prove that you made a verbal claim, you can reopen the case now. If you cannot directly prove that you made a claim either in writing or verbally, you could still use the fact that compensation has been paid to you as evidence that a claim had been made. You might draw the solicitor's attention to the following cases: Powell v. Main Colliery Company (1900) A.C. 366; Lowe v. Myers and Son (1906) 2 K.B. 265. There would have been no difficulty about your case if only the accident had happened after the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1906 came into force. I shall be very much interested to hear if you are able to do anything.

LLP.—The Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1904, prohibits the employment of children under 11 in playing or performing in "premises licensed according to law for public entertainments or in any place of public amusement to which the public are admitted by payment." But this does not apply "in the case of any occasional . . . entertainment the net proceeds of which are wholly applied for the benefit of any school or any charitable object, if such entertainment is held elsewhere than in premises licensed for the sale of any intoxicating liquor, but not licensed according to law for public entertainments." If the place of entertainment is licensed, a special exemption has to be obtained from the justices of the peace. So it depends what your arrangements are, whether you must have licenses for the children or not. It is no difference whether you call it a pantomime or a play. If you are in any doubt about it, it would be best to consult a magistrate.

Julia Dawson's Answers.

C. G. H. (Ollerton).—I think the Birmingham Clarion Handicraft Guild could undertake to bind your Encyclopedia beautifully, and will send your card on to the Secretary, F. G. Barrett, 45, Newhall Street.

W. A. MOORE.—No thanks needed. That is what we are here for. Kind of you to let me know result.

C. LATHAM.—So we made them sit up. Well and good. Glad you are an Adult Suffragist.

A DOMESTIC SERVANT.—I quite agree with you that domestic service develops intelligence, and that servants are likely to make better wives than factory hands. But the fact still remains that girls who choose factory life, with its freedom after working hours, have often more sense to begin with than domestic servants. Most sensible of all are they who, like yourself, leave the factory for the household, do their work well, and then demand such freedom as no reasonable mistress will deny.

MRS. LEWIS.—Have passed your letter, with its practical hint, on to Dorothy Worrall. Better talk to her about those Christmas cards.

GORDON SMITH (Sydney).—Greeting! THE WOMAN WORKER makes her best bow to you, and wishes she could come and see you every day, instead of once a week, in your far home. I would like to see that large-leaved cactus, bearing the bold advertisement in black letters "Read the English 'Clarion,'" and the One and Only WOMAN WORKER. Good business. But, same time, I wonder how the cactus likes it? Write again. Any difficulty in getting our papers in Sydney?

M. H. T.—You dear, good, delightful soul! And to think our good friend, Mary Macpherson, of the Women's Railway League, was in your town lately, and did not know you. It is sweet of you to call THE WOMAN WORKER a tonic. Do not be too disappointed with what you call the pre-historic place with its

old ideas. Of course, it is different from San Francisco. But is it not also more interesting? I just love quaint old places, and quaint old people. You can get so much closer to the heart of things than you can in a big city, where life is all artificial. I do hope your husband will work up a good practice. Of course you have to consider your bread and butter, and to conceal your Socialist views from your aristocratic patients. But remember there are more ways than one of killing a cat. Whilst the honest rough-and-tumble propaganda would never do, you can give occasional gentle injections which patients will never feel, and perhaps only be soothed by. Write again.

BAG-MAKER.—You give no pen-name, but I hope you will recognise this. Certainly we will compel your employers to provide a fire. Such treatment is shameful.

SALVATION ARMY.—Will A. J. T. send his address to F. C. Twilley, 27, Waring Street, Leicester?

T. JOHNSTONE (Holmesville, New South Wales).—You are right. Palliatives are no use, but mere opiates. Do you get THE WOMAN WORKER in West Wallsend?

MRS. BENTLEY.—Your husband and children hunger for you, and believe you read the "Clarion" regularly. Can I do anything to bring you together once again? Will you send me your address in confidence anyhow?

BASIL STALLYBRASS.—Bless you, that is not my first outburst against the destruction of our sandhills, and the sin and wickedness of putting men on to useless and even harmful work, when so much useful work is neglected. As I write now, whilst some men are levelling, others are spoiling hills not to be levelled by covering them with soil. The next thing I suppose will be trim shrubs growing in place of the wild grasses. Cannot you make a row about it locally? It ought to be the stern duty of every Clarionette to protect the beauties of the place he lives in, when there happen to be any.

H. SMITH.—Sent your cutting re Carrie on to Dangle. Thanks.

ATTRACTIVE ADVERTISEMENTS.

The charges for these advertisements are: 20 words for 9d., or three insertions 2s. All such advertisements must be purely personal, and not of a business nature. That is to say, that whilst we shall gladly accept advertisements from men and women wanting to buy, sell, or exchange articles, business firms so advertising can have space on the ordinary advertisement pages, or else pay 5d. per line on this.

Though we cannot accept responsibility for any transaction through this page, or guarantee the good faith of every advertiser, we shall take every care that none but advertisements of a reliable nature are inserted.

Cross your postal orders "WOMAN WORKER," and endorse your envelope "A. A." (Attractive Advertisement), WOMAN WORKER Office, Worship Street, London, E.C. Friday in each week is the latest day for receiving advertisements for the following issue.

JULIA DAWSON.

SITUATIONS WANTED.

COMPANION-HELP (19) seeks Situation with sociable family; experienced; good references; domesticated; North London preferred.—S. Bryn, Station Road, New Barnet.

GIRL SEEKS SITUATION as MAID in Socialist family in London; highest references. Alderley, 18.

SITUATIONS VACANT.

MOTHER'S HELP.—Must be capable of taking entire charge of children, and thoroughly understand all domestic duties; servant kept; wages, £18.—Letters to "D," Somerset House, Seidon Road, Wanstead, Essex.

MOTHER'S HELP WANTED.—Must be fond of children; good home for willing girl who is not afraid of work.—Hounslow, 19.

WANTED.—Good Working House-keeper for Widower with two children; must be good cook and thoroughly understand domestic duties.—Carnbeck, 17.

WANTED. Refined Companionable MOTHER'S HELP, to share in housework and care of two children; vegetarian family of four.—Apply Mrs. CONSTABLE, 1, Ivy Place, Berwick-on-Tweed.

APARTMENTS TO LET.

BED-SITTING-ROOM to Let, Furnished; comfortable home.—27, Hawthorne Road, Willesden, N.W.

COMFORTABLE HOME offered to Aged Person in need of extra care; 17s. board-residence.—Apply: C. 69, Shakespeare Avenue, Stonebridge.

LONDON, N.—Comfortable APARTMENTS for Visitors.—Mrs. EUERBY, 80, Downham Road, Kingsland Road. Bed and Breakfast, 2s. 6d. each person. Recommended.

LONDON (CENTRAL).—Bedrooms to Let. Use Place, Burton Crescent, Euston Road, W.C.

LONDON, N.W.—Double Bed-sitting-room to Let; 2 separate beds, 6s. each. Also single room. Board if desired.—199, Albany Street, Regent's Park.

CLOTHING.

BLACK SILK BODICE, low, trimmed velvet, handsome jet cuirasse. Also Blue Serge Walking Dress; costee trimmed ribbon, light pastel cloth.—Hookhill, 21.

OLD CLOTHES, boots especially, for a poor girl of 14 trying to earn a living. London, 6.

PARCELS of Good, Useful, Left-off CLOTHING; also Day and Evening Gowns, from 5s.; good value.—18, Glenburnie Road, Upper Tooting.

WANTED.—Second-hand Maternity Dress, any loose style, for woman 5ft. 8in., bust 46in. Also warm frocks for son 2 years.—Birmingham, 20.

ORIGINAL DESIGNS FOR EMBROIDERY put on dresses, etc., from 2s. 6d.—FIRTH AND MARSDEN, 16, John Dalton Street, Manchester.

20,000 YARDS NOTTINGHAM LACE GIVEN AWAY.—Valenciennes, Torcous, Insertions; 5 yards free with each assorted parcel.—TAYLOR, Lace Merchant, Ilkeston.

MISCELLANEOUS.

FOR HAND-MADE WOOLLEN GOODS of all descriptions, including Coats, Jerseys, Shawls etc., at Democratic Prices, call or write Miss E. SELF Church Road, Sutton-Coldfield, Birmingham.

FRENCH LADY, experienced, gives FRENCH LESSONS; reading and conversation a speciality. Pupils visited and received.—Mlle. ATRA, 29, Romola Road, Norwood Road, Herne Hill.

HOUSE wanted in London where there is likelihood of obtaining boarders; state rent, rates, accommodation, etc. 8.

LOVELY HAND-PICKED COOKING APPLES.—Very large and sound; good keepers; 56lb. 7s., carr. pd.—WOOLLARD, Kenny Hill, Mildenhall, Cambridgeshire.

UNITARIANISM AN AFFIRMATIVE FAITH.—"The Unitarian Argument" (Biss), "Eternal Punishment" (Stoford Brooke), "Atonement" (Page Hopps), given post free.—Miss BARMBY, Mount Pleasant, Sidmouth.

WANTED.—Good 1-Plate Stand Camera; will exchange Memo Frena hand camera (40 flat films) and outfit, value £3.—London, 16.

12 POSTAL LESSONS IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION, 12/6. Letter-Writing (business, friendly), Article-Construction, Sentence-Formation, Grammar, Style. Particulars, stamp.—Address: PROFESSOR HARRIS-BICKFORD, St. Day. (Name THE WOMAN WORKER.)

FOR SALE.

FRAGRANT WHITE PINKS.—Plant now for June blooming. 100 strong slips, 2/6; 50, 1/6, carriage paid.—SPRAGUE, Kington, Herefordshire.

CENTURY THERMAL BATH CABINET (naused). Cost 45s.; sell 20s., or exchange hanging lamp, wickless stove, or article of furniture. Birmingham, 22.

Replies to above must be addressed according to number indicated, c/o WOMAN WORKER, Utopia Press, Worship Street, E.C., and accompanied by extra stamp for forwarding.

THE HERRING GUTTERS.

Conditions of Work at Yarmouth.

A slip made by "Tona," of the "Labour Leader," in quoting from Mr. John Nicolson's article in THE WOMAN WORKER, caused her to take his description of herring gutters at work in Shetland for an account of conditions at Yarmouth. Mr. Nicolson has written to the "Labour Leader" pointing out this error. He adds that we were responsible, not he, for a reference in the article to Yarmouth, and this is true. What he had written described a Shetland scene in summer. We preface it with a paragraph saying that the same work was now going on at Yarmouth in bitter weather, and that the whole industry is "scandalously managed." But this was the sole "reference," and the heading, "A Shetland Scene," should have saved even a hasty reader from error.

Mr. Joe Duncan, however, has written for the "Labour Leader" an article in which, commenting upon Mr. Nicolson's statement that the work is "dirty, degrading, demoralising, and not work for women," he says "that in his opinion it is infinitely cleaner than work in a jute factory, and not nearly so demoralising as work in a dressmaking room."

It was described by a Special Commissioner of the "Millgate Monthly" before Mr. Nicolson's article appeared; and this Commissioner wrote of Yarmouth, not of Shetland, as follows:

"About 4,000 Scotch women and girls do the 'gutting,' and help in the curing and the packing. They are a steady, sober, clannish class of girls, with ruddy faces, strong limbs, and nerves of iron. They are industrious, too. If there is not much work they invariably employ themselves in knitting garments.

"They are usually attired in a thick homespun skirt, and a cotton or woollen blouse. When working they wear an oilskin overall, sea-boots up to the knees, whilst they are mostly uncovered about the head, and their arms are bare almost to the shoulder. If the weather is very, very bitter, some will protect their heads with rough wraps which they have knitted themselves. The more hardy will leave their arms and heads exposed.

The Pay.

"It is difficult to say how much money they make. I was told at one place from 12s. to 18s. per week; at another place, about 20s. per week; at another nearly 40s. But a fisherman told me that they did well if, taken the season through, their wages averaged 15s.

"Their conditions of labour are much better than before they were brought within the supervision of the Factory Act. They have been seen to work till they have been rendered almost senseless with cold. They now start at six o'clock in the morning, and, with short intervals for meals, continue till six at night. Some commence later and go on till ten and eleven at night, however cold and deadening to their limbs the weather may be. Strict supervision is kept over them. Sometimes when discharged for any error, they are deprived of wages, and are compelled to return to Scotland at their own expense.

"These girls, beaten by the weather,

and, perhaps, beaten harder still by circumstances, are housed more like animals than like human beings—in the roughest and readiest way possible. On account of their occupation some householders will not lodge them. The custom, however, is to let rooms to them from which every particle of furniture, tables, pictures, and carpet has been removed. In some cases even the wall-paper is stripped from the walls. In many cases chairs are not provided. The room is embellished (?) with old herring boxes and barrels, and the girls sit on these, eat from these, and at night time sleep among them. For this palatial provision they pay 3s. and 4s. each per week.

"In spite of the hardihood of some, who seem to be as hard as sea rock, the tragedy of toil is written in many faces, in stooping shoulders, crooked limbs, and listless eyes. There seems no very strong reason why they could not be better protected when working. And, strange to say, the only help usually rendered to them when distressed by the frigidty of the weather is voluntary. Nurses come with them from Scotland without any pay, without any reward except the gratitude of those for whom they make cups of warm tea when the girls become almost unconscious with cold."

PLAYING WITH DEATH.

The shocking accident last week at the Middlesex Music Hall, by which a young man was killed by an expert markswoman known as "Madame Clementina," could not have happened if life were reckoned as it should be—more valuable than any wage by which it is sustained. Poor Lees risked his life nightly for hire, and a brutal music-hall crowd went to see if he would lose it. That was the entertainment.

For the same insufficient motive the markswoman, who is much shocked and unnerved now, and who must undergo her trial for manslaughter, risked imprisonment and the acute distress she evidently feels.

But, if it was an accident that Madame Clementina missed her aim, as the evidence shows it to have been, the shooting of her assistant can only be manslaughter because she was engaged in an unlawful act; and if such an entertainment was unlawful, why was it allowed to be held?

Human life in England is cheap, God knows; but must we admit the fact so cynically? And is there not somebody who ought to be made responsible for every hired manslaughter besides the unhappy performer?

"Mother."

A witness at the Southwark County Court last week spoke of his "mater." His Honour Judge Willis: Oh, give up the Latin and call her "mother." There is no sweeter word in our language. Call your father your "father," too, not "the governor"—there's a good lad. The youngster looked a little stupid.

A Lost Pension.

Before the Acton Pensions Committee a Mrs. Mary Lee, of Somerset Road, Acton Green, was disqualified for a pension because, on June 20 last, she had been given 2s. worth of groceries by the Brentford Guardians. The old lady is 75 years of age, and lives with her husband in one room.

A LUXURY PENNY MAGGI'S BOUILLON CUBES.

Each cube, price 1d., yields instantly half a pint of lovely clear soup by the simple addition of boiling water.

Sold by all grocers. Sample sent on receipt of two postage stamps by

COSENZA & CO., 95, Wigmore St., W.

Ruskin
RUSKIN HOMESPUNS
 (Honest Cloth)
 Straight from Mill to Wearer.
PATTERNS FREE
 of Ladies' Costume Cloths, Shirtings, Art Serges, &c., whichever preferred; also Gent.'s Suitings, Blankets, &c. Test their value. Write Dept. 6, RUSKIN HOMESPUN CO. (Founded by John Ruskin), Laxey, 1, of Man. or Station Street, Huddersfield.

A BOOK FOR LADIES.

The information contained in this book ought to be known by every married woman, and it will not harm the unmarried to read. No book is written which goes so thoroughly into matters relating to married women. Some may think too much is told; such can scarcely be the case, for knowledge is power and the means of attaining happiness. The book can be had in envelope, from Dr. T. R. ALLISON, 152, Room 4, Spanish Place, Manchester Square, London, W., in return for a postal order for 1s. 2d.

THE LATEST FOUNTAIN PEN (1909 Model).

One of the leading manufacturers of Gold Fountain Pens challenges to demonstrate that their Pens are the very best, and have the largest sale, that no better article can be produced.

They offer to give away 100,000 10/6 Diamond Star Fountain Pens, 1908 Model, for 2/6 each.

This Pen is fitted with 14-carat Solid Gold Nib, iridium-pointed, making it practically everlasting, smooth, soft and easy writing, and a pleasure to use. Twin Feed and Spiral to regulate the flow of ink, and all the latest improvements. One of the letters we daily receive: "Please send me THREE MORE PENS: the half-dozen in use are giving every satisfaction to my friends."



THE SELF-FILLING AND SELF-CLEANING PERFECTION FOUNTAIN PEN is a marvel of simplicity; it deserves to be popular. It is non-leakable, fills itself in an instant, cleans itself in a moment—a press, a fill—and every part is guaranteed for two years. The massive 14-carat Gold Nib is iridium pointed, and will last for years, and improves in use. Fine, Medium, Broad, or J points can be had.

This Marvellous Self-Filling Pen, worth 15/4, is offered as an advertisement for 5/6 each. 5/6 Is certain to be the Pen of the Future. Every Pen is guaranteed, and money will be returned if not fully satisfied. Any of our readers desiring a really genuine article cannot do better than write to the Makers: MYNART & CO., Ltd. (Dept. C.), 71, High Holborn, London, and acquire this bargain. (Agents wanted.)

HEROINES OF THE GRILLE.

Release on Saturday.

Miss Muriel Matters, Mrs. Duval, Miss Tillard, Miss Bremner, and Miss Manning were released from Holloway on Saturday.

At a breakfast Miss Muriel Matters—"the heroine of the Grille"—said, amidst laughter, that any praise or blame for that adventure was due to the arch-conspirator, Mrs. Billington-Grieg. But in Holloway she had the reputation of being "the worst prisoner." She came away convinced that the system produced criminals.

"The chaplain," Miss Matters continued, "told me not to go there again, and was very emphatic about it. We had a big row. It was his bigotry. I shall not easily forget the scorn with which he treated me when I asked for a Christian Science text-book; nor the curve of his lip and the contemptuous way in which he said: 'You don't call that religion, do you?'" (Laughter.)

Mrs. Duval said the chaplain asked her what her husband thought of her being linked up with "this unseemly excitement." When she answered that she agreed with it he replied: "That does not say much for him." (Laughter.)

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS.

A Defence of Brutality.

The meeting of the Women's Anti-Suffrage League last week at Covent Garden (Lady Jersey presiding) was remarkable for a large platform of ladies of the nobility and gentry.

Mr. Julius Bertram, M.P., made a still more remarkable speech. He said that the electorate of this country must be maintained with "the same virility, the same masculinity, and, if they liked, the same brutality as that of other countries."

Russia, for example.

Mrs. Frederic Harrison informed the meeting, amid applause, that in Sussex the women's franchise is opposed by all the labourers' and farmers' wives, and all the domestic servants.

A great meeting will be held in the Albert Hall in January to voice this opposition worthily; and the League is to publish a monthly paper.

Mr. Malcolm Mitchell, hon. secretary of the Men's League, tells the story that an anti-Suffragist of his acquaintance was so resolved to keep women in "their proper place" that she had written to her library, threatening to withdraw her subscription if they ever sent her a book written by a woman.

Miss Cicely Hamilton has some verses on the new League in "Women's Franchise":

Trot off home—you really shock us!

Hera in public you are met;

But it isn't nice at all

To hold meetings in a hall.

You must leave that to the naughty suffragette.

Miss Hamilton has been attending anti-Suffrage meetings, and gave to the

Women's Freedom League last week a lively description of their proceedings. The view of the average man, she said, was that women did not count. Every woman was looked on as somebody's wife.

"Yet," said Miss Hamilton emphatically, "we really belong to ourselves; we don't belong to anyone else. In urging this we are clashing with fixed ideas."

Miss Hamilton went on to tell an amusing story of an Irish engine-driver. The stationmaster called out to him, "Look out, Tim; the goods train is coming down on your line."

"Och," was the engine-driver's cheerful reply, "let her come, thin. Sure, she'll meet her match."

Miss Hamilton wished the men who seemed so timid about women having the vote would lay that story to heart; she was sure they had no need for alarm; they should have more confidence in themselves.

WOMAN IN FRANCE.

In regard to her treatment of women, France has been described as the "China of Europe," but every week now brings evidence of the new spirit and tendencies with which the noble and gifted women at the head of French feminism have inoculated the newer time.

To facilitate the careers of women as doctors and lawyers, the Government have decreed the establishment of optional classes for Latin in all colleges for girls throughout the country; and, still more important, women have been made eligible for election of the Councils of Prud'hommes, which are courts for the settlement of trade and industrial disputes.

Moreover, a number of professors of the Paris Faculty of Law, following an example set by Bordeaux, have started a course of gratuitous evening classes for women on "Practical Law," to make known to them their legal rights and obligations.

At the Westminster City Council last week, an application by the women sanitary inspectors to be placed on an equality as regards salary with the male inspectors was rejected, one Councillor suggesting brutally that if the officials concerned were unable to stand the "continual mental strain" which they said was involved they should resign their positions.

SANITARY INSPECTORS.

Yet, at a very recent meeting, an application that the age limit for women under the new superannuation scheme should be lower than that for men was rejected by the Council on the ground that men and women officers must be treated alike!

LONDON'S HUNGRY CHILDREN.

So that the County Council may escape its duty of feeding hungry children at the public cost, the Mansion House Committee is making desperate appeals for subscriptions. £7,500 will be wanted up to the end of January, and only £4,000 is forthcoming.

The Committee has not hesitated to ask the Queen to help in this evasion of the law.

THE LABOUR MEMBERS.

How to Pay Their Salaries.

The opinion expressed by most of the Labour members on the decision of the Court of Appeal against the payment of their salaries out of trade union funds is that there will have to be new legislation. When Messrs. Henderson and Barnes come back from Germany, a decision on the point will be taken.

Mr. Henderson considers that the immediate difficulty may be overcome by a voluntary levy. The appeal, he adds, should go to the House of Lords, and if that fails, "we must promote legislation, as in the Taff Vale case."

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is bent on fighting "for the restitution of liberty of action similar to that which capitalists now enjoy."

Mr. Will Crooks, M.P., maintains that there is not a constituency in the country desiring to return a Labour representative but will be able to provide the necessary funds, and adds that "our opponents must not forget that Taff Vale led to the Trades Disputes Act. The decision will not smash the Labour Party."

Mr. J. R. MacDonald said at Blackburn on Sunday that, honest as English Judges were, their views took colour from their class.

Mr. W. C. Steadman and Mr. Barnes expect voluntary levies. Mr. Barnes says that 95 per cent. of the A.S.E. will gladly pay such levies.

THE RULE OF THE PEERS.

While Lady Jersey gets up an agitation to prevent women workers from being citizens, Lord Lansdowne arranges to over-ride British citizenship in general.

At the meeting held in his town house last week, the fact that the Peers rule us was advertised quite openly. Lord Lansdowne got together a Peers' caucus to decide on throwing out the Licensing Bill.

Ministers are very angry, the Peers being mostly owners of brewery shares; but they are not going to dissolve, of course. Why not try a Right to Work Bill or an Adult Suffrage Bill at once, and when that is thrown out, go to the country? Do let us have plenty to fight for!

NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN WORKERS.

Mrs. Walter Barrow presided over the autumn conference of the Birmingham branch of the National Union of Women Workers. An interesting address on "The Industrial Training of Girls" was given by Miss Helen M. Smith, of the Borough Polytechnic Institute.

Miss Smith said that effort was being made in the right direction in London by the establishment of day trade schools for girls, to which selected pupils passed from the ordinary schools. The apprenticeship system being superseded by technical instruction, let them see that the same amount of money for that purpose was spent on the girls as on the boys.

WOMEN'S LABOUR LEAGUE.

Edited by Mrs. J. R. MacDonald.

The Handsworth branch of the League organised a very successful social gathering on Saturday, November 21, when 150 sat down to tea, and others came in later for a dance. One of the men comrades presented them with a banner for the occasion, on which was the inscription, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."

The Handsworth women are setting about their ruling in a very practical manner, for one of the chief questions they are dealing with as a League is the feeding of school children. Mrs. Mitchell, Secretary of the League, writes that Councillor Aston brought the matter before the Council at its last meeting, but it was postponed a month for inquiries. Meanwhile, arrangements have been made to get Councillor Palin, from Bradford, to give his lantern lecture on what is being done in Bradford, so as to rouse local enthusiasm before the next Council meeting.

Bradford Children.

Anyone who has seen the most interesting photographs of the children and the dinner tables, the cooks and the kitchen, where thousands of dinners are prepared with less time and trouble than most women take to prepare for their own two or three children, and last, but not least, the motors which carry the dinners hot from the cooking centre to the schools all over the city, will realise that children in other places are being disgracefully neglected for want of such organisation.

Hull and Medical Inspection.

Mrs. Deyes writes from Hull that on November 4 their rooms were crowded to hear a lecture from Dr. Nelson on the subject of "The Medical Inspection of School Children."

This is a theme in which Dr. Nelson is intensely interested, and his remarks were helpful. He pointed out that inspection without treatment is not of much avail, and gave it as his opinion that in the near future special schools will be established for weak and ailing children. Inspection might now be faulty in detail, but it heralded an eventual State medical service.

Glasgow Feeds the Bairns.

Miss Kate Taylor, our Glasgow secretary, writes on notepaper with the significant heading, "Feed the Bairns."

She tells of the work of their members towards this object, in which they are co-operating with the L.L.P. They issued 30,000 leaflets at the municipal elections, when nearly all their members were busy one way and another in fighting the good fight. They also have 5,000 leaflets printed specially to give to the women with whom they come in touch.

Miss Taylor says: "The shelter we have is not the most ideal place we might have chosen if we had plenty of money, but the sorrowing hearts and the empty stomachs have been numerous enough in all conscience." She ends with a touch of pride. "Our membership keeps steadily growing, and I hope soon we will be the strongest branch of the W.L.L. in Britain, if not the most important."

She herself has been appointed delegate to our Portsmouth Conference on January 26. Glasgow to Portsmouth is a long distance, and we hope that all our branches which have less far to go will take example from this and be sure to send a delegate, for it is an immense help both to the local and the National movements to have as full representation as possible.

Newcastle Our Latest Recruit.

Welcome to another new branch in the North! Mrs. Simm writes: "I am glad to tell you that we had a very interesting meeting on November 26 in Newcastle, and a resolution heartily supporting the aims of the W.L.L. was carried unanimously—followed by the formation of a branch. Mrs. W. E. Moll presided, and Mrs. Johnson spoke about the local work of the Barrow W.L.L.,

and Mrs. McLaurin (Gateshead) put in a few words of support; so one of the oldest and one of the newest branches were able to help us. Quite a large number of women present took part in an animated discussion.

"Through the kindness of the Refreshment Committee, tea and coffee and cakes were provided, and we took an interval for refreshments and enrolling of members. Benwell branch sent quite a contingent of visitors. Miss W. F. Pledger, 60, Prospect Place, Newcastle, was unanimously appointed secretary; Mrs. Oswald Richardson is the president, and Mrs. W. E. Moll, treasurer. The next meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. M. D. Shaw, 13, Bristol Terrace, Newcastle (Elswick Road car) on Thursday, December 10, at 8 p.m."

Please Note.

Will secretaries who send reports for use in this column kindly write on one side of the paper only, as otherwise it entails copying out half what they send, since manuscript for printers must only be written on one side?

WOMEN IN POLITICS.

By Margaret G. Bondfield.

Talk about women in politics! These women of the Hyde Division are up to their necks in the game. It matters not whether you fly for safety to some out-of-the-way hamlet across the hills, or whether you make a call in the busiest part of the town, something like this will happen to you:

STRANGER: What a lovely walk it is to Comptail across the hills!

1ST CITIZENESS: Yes, isn't it? Half the village only is in our division—about 200 voters, perhaps.

STRANGER: Division?

1ST CIT. (in surprised tones): Yes. We are running a Labour candidate, you know!

STRANGER: There's a whisk drive on Wednesday at Mrs. B.'s. Are you coming?

1ST CIT.: No. I shall be at the Labour Club working party. We have three machines at the Club. (Exit 1st Citizeness.)

STRANGER: Does she mean bicycles?

2ND CIT. (with scorn): No, sewing machines.

We are making things for the L.R.C. United Bazaar.

STRANGER: Oh! And what is the bazaar for?

2ND CIT. (with more scorn): Why, the election fund, of course. (Exit 2nd Citizeness.)

STRANGER: What a beautiful sideboard cloth!

Did you make it?

3RD CIT.: Yes. There's six yards of crochet in the border; it ought to fetch a good sum, I think.

STRANGER: Oh! Is it for sale, then?

3RD CIT. (compassionately): Why, it's for the bazaar, of course!

(Exit Stranger, feeling most humble and useless.)

The Women's Labour League seems to be the driving force. We heard such tales of baking and tea brewing—"all for the Cause"; and we heard the audacious tale of the quilt that is going to add fabulous sums to the election coffers. It is to consist of squares, and each alternate square is to have a signature worked in silk. Each signee pays a shilling for the honour of being sewn into the quilt!

I had the good fortune to attend a W.L.L. social on Saturday week.

The Labour Church Hall was crowded with a gay company of men and women, who tripped through most giddy dances; and of little children, who took possession of the floor for games while their elders rested.

What games we had!

"Of course this is to aid the Election Fund!" I said. But I was wrong! You cannot take anything for granted when dealing with these energetic women.

The profits from this social are to be devoted to relieving cases of distress. Not merely handed over to a distress committee, mind; but distributed personally by members of the League, in a spirit of loving sympathy, to those who have suffered almost beyond endurance "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"—and by whom the love and sympathy will be remembered long after the material help has been forgotten.

These women of Hyde are building bigger than they know. More power to them!

MARRIAGE AND THE VOTE.

An Open Letter to Mr. Birrell.

To the RIGHT HON. A. BIRRELL, Esq., M.P.

Sir,—I have before me a page the opening passage of which runs, "The world is governed by logic. Truth as well as Providence is always on the side of the strongest battalions. An illogical opinion only requires rope enough to hang itself."

I have also a newspaper cutting in which I read that "Mr. Birrell, in reply to questions, said he was still, and always had been, in favour of widows and single women being admitted to the franchise, but he had never acceded to the view that married women had the same claim."

You are, I believe, head of some great department of State—Cabinet changes have of late been so many and rapid that it is hard to keep count; but there is another lawyer who is at the head of another great department, and who, I am told, is much exercised by lack of men to be used up as possible food for powder.

Sir James Crichton Browne, Sir Lauder Brunton, and the Bishop of London have written and spoken much on the need for more married women to produce more men for the defence of our kingdom and the full peopling of our Empire beyond the seas. Is it illogical to assume that to become a wife as a prelude to becoming a mother is honourable and worthy State service?

If it is worthy State service, will you be so good as to say why a woman is to be disgraced, degraded—i.e., to lose in grade by changing from a free and enlightened voter to a voteless serf—when entering the marriage state?

There are, I believe, two Cabinet Ministers who have become married men since you took office. Do you seriously suggest that the wives of those two men are less worthy, less gracious, or less valuable as citizens, by reason of their marriage?

Would you care to put the question seriously to the two husbands?

With a full recognition of what women have done for a principle—recalling women like George Eliot and others—I suggest that your answer at Bristol is a direct incentive to concubinage.

It may possibly be news to you—great Minister though you be—to be told that there has grown up a system by which it is now true to say, "There is no department of State or municipal service without a penalty on marriage."

The positive, logical, and certain result of any regularly "enforced celibacy" is manifest irregularity and illegality.

Is citizenship honourable and desirable?

Is the right to vote a pride or a shame?

Is a mother less worthy than a father?

Why should a woman be deprived of a right when making herself of more value to the State?

I submit to you that public morality and logic unite in demanding a new and further consideration of this important question. For you should bear in mind the writer who tells us that the world wearies of "middlemen who are for ever telling us how it comes about that they stand just where they do. . . . The baffled illogicians quickly grow antiquated and completely forgotten."

For the sake of the commonwealth be warned in good time.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

T. SHORE.

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