

The Woman Worker

Official Organ of the National Federation of Women Workers.

Edited by MARY R. MACARTHUR (Secretary, Women's Trade Union League).

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VOL. I.—No. 4.

DECEMBER, 1907.

ONE PENNY.

EDITORIAL



THE *Woman Worker* continues to make many new friends. From all parts of the country we have received helpful, encouraging letters. Shop-workers, office-workers, mill-workers, factory-workers, have written to tell us how much the journal is needed, and that they will do all in their power to make it better known. We are more than ever confident that the magazine can be made a strong force in stirring working women to take a deeper interest in all questions affecting their welfare and freedom.

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Many of our best helpers and workers are men who see how necessary it is to have the women with them in the struggle for improved conditions. Men now realise that they cannot fight their battles alone. Either the women will help or hinder. For the sake of men and women alike, and, above all, for the sake of the children, it is urgently imperative that women should be educated to take an honourable place in the Labour army. Our central aim is to win over new recruits to the organised cause of the workers, and to teach the deeper meaning of the movement to those who are already with us.

* * *

We have received during the month kindly messages of sympathy and support from Prince Kropotkin, Edward Carpenter, Rev. R. J. Campbell, and Dr. John Clifford. "I have the utmost sympathy for your work," writes Dr. Clifford. "I am in fullest sympathy with your desire to organise women workers, and trust it will meet with success," says the Rev. R. J. Campbell. On all sides there is a desire to see the lot of the worker made brighter and happier. This is true in a peculiar degree of sweated and underpaid women. But nothing much will be done until working men and working women with united strength open the gates leading toward culture and a more abundant life.

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The announcements made on another page respecting our future contributors will, we are sure, be highly appreciated by our readers. The list includes many of the best-known men and women in the Reform movement. Bishops, clergymen, artists, editors, Members of Parliament, distinguished novelists, journalists, students, Trade Union officers, social reformers, have vied with each other in their desire to help the women's cause. All this augurs well for the future and the increasing success of our journal.

Many of the contributions sent in by *bonâ-fide* wage-earners in mill, factory, office, and shop show surprising talent, and the magazine will discharge a useful function in helping to call out these latent gifts. From time to time we shall publish letters and short articles from work-girls dealing with their daily toil, with work and wages, with their struggles for betterment and unity.

* * *

We are sorry we cannot join in the practically unbroken chorus of congratulation and praise which the so-called settlement of the railway dispute has called forth upon all concerned.

* * *

We have no desire to appear ungenerous or unfair. The officials of the Railwaymen's Union were in the best position to gauge the strength or weakness of their movement, and the action of Mr. Lloyd-George undoubtedly placed them in a tight corner. If the rank and file voluntarily accept and endorse the settlement, they may be assumed to be the best judges of their own interests. But there is a wider Trade Union principle involved, and it would be calamitous if the present agreement were set up as a precedent in future disputes. For what does the railway settlement amount to?

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Even the first principle of Trade Unionism has not been conceded to the railway servants—the right to be represented by officials whom the employers have no power to victimise. The spectacle of a Conciliation Board on which a shunter or a signalman will in person tell his directors what he thinks about his wages and hours is not one that will fill any Trade Unionist with enthusiasm. In practice it will be found that the settlement hailed with such rapture in the Press has given the directors the bone and the employees the shadow. Unhappily the hands of the Union are practically tied for seven years. Directors can now sleep o' nights unhaunted by the dread of a strike.

Improvement in the labouring conditions of the railway-men seems as far off as ever. Yet there is no class of wage-earners more deserving of just treatment. At great personal risk they discharge a valuable and responsible public service. Last year the railways showed a net profit of over £44,000,000. How did the workmen fare? Out of 305,000 railway workers affected by the agitation 100,930 receive not more than 20s. a week; and of these 23,420 receive from 12s. to 15s. a week. More than 61,000 railway servants are working twelve hours a day and upwards. In the ten years, 1897-1906, 5,238 railway servants were killed and 146,746 injured. It cannot be doubted that in the search for dividend, railway directors and shareholders overlook the interests alike of their employees and the general public. If the present unrest has accomplished nothing else, it has given an impetus to the movement for State-owned railways run from the standpoint of the advantage and convenience of the entire community.

It is amusing to find some hard-driven opponents of Wages Boards seizing upon the railway settlement as an argument against the establishment of a legal minimum wage in Sweated Industries. They are committing themselves to the somewhat reckless assertion that the Railway Conciliation Boards will be practically identical with the Wages Boards outlined in Mr. Henderson's Sweated Industries Bill. Such a statement is manifestly a mere figment of a hostile imagination. The Sweated Industries Bill explicitly recognises Trade Unions and Trades Councils, conferring upon them power to demand an inquiry into any trade represented by them. More than this, the workers under the Bill are allowed to nominate anyone to watch over their interests on the Board; and it is certain that in most cases Trade Union officials would be elected. It is the failure to concede this point that robs the railway settlement of its value. Therefore any attempted analogy between the two systems breaks down hopelessly.

Messrs. J. and P. Coats Ltd. show a net profit on the year's working amounting to £3,056,125. This is good news. It will gladden the hearts of the Paisley mill-ladies, who in many cases are working for a wage hardly more than half what their Lancashire sisters receive for the same class of work. It will gladden the heart of the seamstress who knows that spools which used to contain 200 yards are apt to come to an untimely end at 100 yards because a Trust has now got the upper hand. In ten years this great monopoly has been able to make profits of £22,000,000. It controls the output of cotton thread in this country, and has greatly increased prices without increasing wages. But is it not a little inconsistent that these capitalists who have combined to obtain better profits should have shrieked in righteous indignation when their Paisley workers threatened to combine to secure better wages?

Last year was one of great industrial activity and prosperity. There was a great boom in the Textile trades. Fresh capital flowed into the various industries, new mills and factories were hastily erected, exports and imports were enormously increased, large dividends were declared. Free Traders were able to smite the Protectionists hip and thigh with the story of our commercial progress. And last year 1,116 fatal accidents, and 110,788 non-fatal accidents, were reported under the Factory and Workshop Act! Hundreds of lives are needlessly sacrificed every year through bad conditions and unsafe machinery. Organised Labour is slowly teaching the manufacturers that the progress and prosperity of a nation are not to be measured by our exports of cheap shirtings or shoddy tweeds, but by the comfort and freedom of the millions of working men and women within our borders.

SOME Special Features of Our Next Issue!

SHORT ARTICLE BY THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM:

A Message to the Women of England,
entitled "Women and Organisation."

"BOURNVILLE: A Garden Factory"

With Photographic Illustrations.
By WILLIAM C. ANDERSON.

"THE TWO NATIONS."

Special Article by the Hon. Charles
Lister.

"FROM MY TENEMENT WINDOW,"

Characteristic Sketch by Victor Grayson, M.P.

(Held over from the present issue.)

"THE STORY OF AN IRISH STRIKE,"

By Mary Galway
(Secretary Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland.)

Our Portrait Gallery.

No. 4.—MRS. PETE CURRAN.

MRS. PETE CURRAN, as the first of her virtues, is an Irish-woman, and she has the racy speech, the optimism, and the light heart of her nation. Her soft voice and frank, comely face tell unmistakably of the sainted, snakeless land where, despite great dearth, life flows as merrily as the Shannon; where

"The good are always the merry
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance."



MRS. PETE CURRAN.

which was given. "And now, my dears," he said, "what is latitude?" "Troth, sir," retorted a little maid, "it's what we never get in Ireland. The police won't allow us any."

Had Mrs. Curran remained in Ireland she had doubtless carved her name boldly among the renowned of the children of Cork. But Providence decreed otherwise, and at a very early age she came from Ireland to London, where in young womanhood she started to work in a tailoring factory. It was here that her racial bias "agin the Government" began to assert itself—not the same Government, however, that excited the ire of her countrymen.

In that East End factory the young Irish girl saw the shadow not of the Saxon oppression, but of a vaguer and vaster tyranny: the shadow not of Dublin Castle, but of that other castle of which Swinburne sings—

"Where other spoilers sit
Trampling the children of men";

of the great government of capital, which fetters not any one people, but fetters the weak and humble everywhere.

Mrs. Curran (Marion Barry she was then) found her comrades treated as industrial women so often are. They were underpaid, bullied, overworked. Needless to say, they were discontented; needless to add, they were unorganised. A few of them had heard of Trade Unionism, and with these Miss Barry took earnest counsel. Heads were laid together, and one day the plotters had reward, and the first East London Branch of the London Tailoresses Union came to birth.

"Henceforward," says Mrs. Curran, "a new feeling came into the workroom, and those of us who were Unionists became strong and hopeful. Even when our

work was hardest and most unpleasant, the promise and comradeship of the Union kept our hearts light, and encouraged us to look beyond the trials of the moment to the brighter and happier days that we felt were ahead."

It was at one of the meetings of the Tailoresses' Union that Miss Barry made her first speech. Miss Marion Tuckwell, the then Secretary of the Women's Trade Union League, had given an address which touched the young tailoress deeply. Involuntarily, when the principal speaker had ended, she leapt to her feet and poured out to her colleagues a burning appeal for greater zeal and devotion in developing their Union and helping working women to a loftier state. The speech was an eventful one, for when a few weeks afterwards the Women's Trade Union League determined to appoint an Assistant-Secretary, Miss Tuckwell remembered the tailoresses' meeting, and gave the post to the maiden orator of that occasion. In a little while it was found possible to release the new official from the burden of secretarial work, and henceforward Miss Barry was able to devote her whole time to organising activity. She commenced at a propitious moment.

At this time the industrial world was still rubbing its eyes over the dockers' strike. To the scandal of Political Economy, the unskilled dock labourers abruptly tired of a starvation wage. A great spontaneous movement for betterment broke out, and, led by Burns and Tillett, the dockers boldly claimed their "tanner" per hour. What is more, they got it. The iron law of wages did not for a little while recover the shock, and Mrs. Curran took advantage of its indisposition. Her efforts were helped by the impulse which the dockers' victory had communicated to all grades of workers, including even factory girls. There were calls for women speakers and organisers, and many little Unions sprung into sudden life. Jute-workers at Stratford, Silk-weavers at Halstead, Blouse-makers and Tailoresses in London, were organised in succession. At Coventry Mrs. Curran had a specially interesting experience. Changes in the making of tyres had resulted in a big displacement of male labour and in the substitution of that of badly-paid girls. Finding some difficulty in ascertaining the facts of the employment of the girls, Mrs. Curran went as employee into the works herself. A discovery of abominably low payments and the formation of a Union brought her effort to a conclusion.

Subsequently, Mrs. Curran, like a second St. Patrick, revisited the land of her youth to preach economic deliverance to her countrywomen. In Ireland they have a peculiar conception of Trade Unionism, and Mrs. Curran has many tales to tell of her experiences. There was the Unionist who, when he had got a few of his comrades organised, immediately prepared to strike. "What are you going to strike for?" asked a friend. "Shure, we'll have plenty of time to think about what we are going to strike for when we come out," said the enthusiast. "It's only black-legs who bother about reasons for striking."

Besides many laurels won in organising women, Mrs. Curran gained distinction by evidence given before the House of Commons' Committee of Inquiry into Government Contracts, and by representing the W.T.U.L. at the International Socialist Congress held in London in 1896. She has also the glory of being the first woman to go on picket duty in London, which she did during the strike of tailors and tailoresses several years ago.

Since her marriage to Mr. Pete Curran, Mrs. Curran has no longer as much time as formerly for organising work. The fires of her devotion, however, have not burned low, and still, on occasion, she renders valuable service to the W.T.U.L. and the National Federation of Women Workers.

And she is not less optimistic than of old. The organisation of women on a large scale, sooner or later, she says, must come, and then with the women helping the men, and both permeated by ideals of mutual help and brotherhood, we shall be at the door of the millennium.

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The True Atheism - - Russell Lowell.

Complaints and the Law.

Talks with the Doctor

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Women's News of the Week.

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Dr. X.Y.Z.

MARY R. MACARTHUR.

Mrs. J. R. MacDONALD.

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DAUGHTERS OF THE GODS: Ought Women to Work?

By L. G. CHIOZZA MONEY, M.P.

Is it for good or for evil that woman is increasingly competing with man in the world of work?

Plato wrote: "In the administration of the State, neither a man as a man, or a woman as a woman, has any especial function, but the gifts of Nature are equally diffused in both sexes; and the pursuits of man are the pursuits of woman also."

That is a clear answer to my question, and modern science is beginning to endorse the verdict of Plato, even while woman herself is showing, in a thousand different branches of occupation, the rapidity with which she can emancipate herself from economic dependence upon man.

As one who has always seen more of good than of evil in the increase in the numbers of independent working women, I welcome the growth of any important literature on this subject. I have before me Dr. Emmet Densmore's "Sex Equality," published by Messrs. Swan, Sonnenschein and Co. It is a work which accepts the dictum of Plato, and offers a cloud of witnesses as to its truth. Dr. Densmore gives as a frontispiece to his book a picture which strikes its keynote. It is a photograph of the beautiful Greek statue of Orestes and Electra, now preserved at the National Museum of Naples. It shows Orestes, the man, and Electra, the woman, alike tall and well developed, alike exhibiting the grace which springs from health and strength. Electra is not the narrow-shouldered, short-legged creature held up to scorn by Schopenhauer. She is as well fitted as her mate to play her part in the world—

"A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair."

Has the reader noticed that the new generation of women is taller than the last, and that the young girls of the present time bid fair to top their mothers? Electra is no impossible ideal. The fainting, hysterical woman of Dickens' novels, who wept copiously on every possible and impossible occasion, has already disappeared. We have discovered that womanhood and weakness are not synonymous. It is a happy discovery, both for the man and for the woman.

The inferior strength of civilised woman is merely a result of centuries of training in unfitness. Organic constitution does not account for the great muscular difference between civilised men and women. The difference has arisen through long generations of environment and occupation. Savage women do not exhibit such a great disparity, nor is it exhibited by the females of the higher animals. The tigress can take care of herself, in spite of her function of maternity. And woman will from this time forward increasingly learn to take care of herself. The time will surely come when a woman will be as ashamed to exhibit cowardice as a man. The great strides she has made in the last generation, the improved physique of well-fed and well-trained British women, shows with what rapidity she is likely to advance in the next generation.

This question of relative strength is of extreme importance to both men and women in the economic field. We find women content nearly everywhere to accept a lower wage than men for the same work. It is a content which springs from the inferior strength, which is the inherited effect of centuries of dependence and restriction. "The past," as Dr. Lester Ward, President of the American

Sociological Society, has said, "has always been characterised by inequality of sex. The future will be characterised by greater and greater equality. The inequalities that have been inherited from the past prevail to a large extent in the present, and most persons assume that they are natural and necessary."

We have assumed as a matter of course that woman should occupy an inferior position and earn a lower wage. That assumption has been an evil not for women alone. Woman in industry under present conditions becomes a leveller-down of wages—an instrument to lower the standard of remuneration. We are entitled to hope that, with increased opportunity, civilised woman will regain those traits of courage and self-reliance which are the common heritage of man and woman, and that every step towards sex equality will be a gain to both sexes.

How is this desirable equality to be attained? "In order," said Darwin, "that woman should reach the same standard as man, she ought, when nearly adult, to be trained to energy and perseverance, and to have her reason and imagination exercised to the highest point; and then she would probably transmit these qualities to her adult daughters." Let woman dress sensibly, and pursue healthily a variety of occupations calling for the exercise of her latent powers, and from mother to daughter will pass on an increasingly noble womanhood, not less sweet because it issues from strength. "The woman of the future will be the fit and equal partner of the future man."

"For further progress," says Dr. Densmore, "it is necessary that women enter more generally the rank of industrial workers. Through this increased association the refining and elevating influences which each sex, under favourable conditions, exert upon the other will be augmented." Woman, we are promised, will gain in powers of generalisation, initiative, invention, and logical deduction, while man will increase in powers of intuition, spirituality, refinement, patience, and unselfishness. "Then will men and women truly companion each other, and their mutually uplifting influence will be at its culmination."

The strength woman needs to engage increasingly in men's occupations she will gain from use of her muscles. Since free exercise gave men their stature, and since restriction is the cause of woman's inferiority in size, strength, and health, it follows that so long as the present trend towards healthful exercise on the part of women continues, the present disparity between the sexes will diminish; and it is difficult to escape the conclusion that when woman has had an environment as favourable as that of man for a sufficient number of generations, she will become his equal in physical development. Examples are already to be found in the world. A recent writer gives a striking picture of the woman of Galicia as evidence that physical disability is not necessarily the portion of the female. The muscular development of the Galician woman is splendid. She can carry great weights with consummate ease, and thinks nothing of bearing on her head, from the fountain to a third floor, as many as seventy large buckets of water on a summer's day. Moreover, she has a well-developed brain, and is fully equal to her men-folk in energy and perseverance.

In fine, we are allowed to hope that the wonderful women who have enriched the pages of history as masters of state-

craft, and even of war, are not to be regarded as abnormalities, but as types of what woman may easily become after a few generations of opportunity.

We are not, then, to think of woman at work as an evil. We are only to think of women at work under improper conditions as an evil. We ought not to believe that woman's function of maternity need bar her from success in material and artistic pursuits. We have to remember that we are subduing disease, and that the time is not far removed when the normal life of man will extend to some one hundred or one hundred and twenty-five years.

Indeed, the hale and hearty man of seventy or eighty, upright and in full possession of his faculties, is already a commonplace in the well-to-do classes. In the time to come, therefore, the continuance of the race will be secured by each woman bearing but two children. Thus the average woman in that day will have a long span of life to be spent in other occupations than that of maternity and child-rearing. She will be a happy woman worker, as different from the overworked poor woman as from the unemployed matinee-hunter of the present. *The woman worker is thus a permanent factor in civilisation.*

NOTES FROM THE WOMEN'S LABOUR LEAGUE.

The first annual Conference of the Women's Labour League will be held at Hull, in the Assembly Rooms (in which the Labour Party is also meeting) on Saturday afternoon, January 18th, at 2.5 p.m.; and Monday, January 20th, at 10 a.m., with a reception to delegates on Saturday evening at the same place.

Our branches are now preparing their resolutions to be sent in by December 6th for the agenda. Although this will be the third National Conference of the League, it will only be about one and a half years old at the time. For its inaugural Conference was held at Leicester in June, 1906, its next last Whitsuntide, in London; and the members of the League then decided to hold it the following year at the same time and place as that of the Labour Party itself, with which we work in conjunction.

There is an active branch of the League at Hull, which has extended a cordial invitation for us to go there. This branch is also busy with the Parliamentary bye-election, when Mr. James Holmes, of the Railway Servants Union, will carry the Labour banner in West Hull. The result will probably be known by the time these notes are published; but whether we win or lose, we shall have put in all the work and enthusiasm possible to increase the strength of our cause.

The members of the League, including many members of the Railway Women's Guilds and the Women's Co-operative Guild, are folding circulars, writing addresses, canvassing, speaking, and doing all the usual work of elections which may be described as drudgery, enlivened by excitement.

The branches of the League usually hold meetings for educating their members on political subjects and training them to speak and express their thoughts clearly. The Central London Branch is holding such a meeting on Wednesday evening, December 18th, at 8 p.m., at 3, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. Mrs. Despard will open the discussion on "The Labour Party's Unemployed Bill," and we hope to get an opponent (from outside) to help us sharpen our wits to defend our position. Visitors are allowed, so anyone interested who is not a member of the branch will be welcomed. As Unemployment is one of the two questions (the other is Old Age Pensions) to which the Labour Party is devoting special attention just now, it is important to know fully what its proposals are for improving our very unsatisfactory Distress Committees and giving them more money and greater powers.

The Women's Labour League was well represented at the National Conference on the Unemployment of Women and Girls, which was arranged by the Women's Industrial Council, held at the Guildhall on October 15th. Miss Margaret Smith, of Birmingham, a member of the League Executive, had made a special study of conditions and possible remedies for unemployment among women in her city; whilst Mrs. Macrosty, of London, summarised the

answers to special inquiries sent out by the League regarding slackness in season trades. Other members of the League were present and took part in the discussion. Miss Willson, secretary of the Boot and Shoe Union, Leicester, gave the Trade Union side well.

No resolutions were passed; the subject was too big, and the method of dealing with it too undeveloped, for that to be possible in a non-party Conference. But the evils and the prevalence of unemployment and slackness amongst women and girls were brought out indisputably; and the alternative of domestic service and emigration which are so persistently thrown at us when we talk of women out of work were shown to be quite inadequate as remedies. The gentleman who tells you that there is plenty of work waiting for women because his wife wants a parlour-maid and cannot get one, was reminded that his wife would not wish to engage a factory girl, unskilled in domestic arts; and that the widow with children dependent on her, and the hard-pressed wife of the unemployed man had houses of their own to look after, and could not wait upon his table. Yet it is these latter women, with others dependent on them, on whom slack times press most hardly, and who are the keenest competitors against the regular wage-earners. It was insisted at the Conference that local Distress Committees should appoint official sub-committees to deal with women, as London has done, and that workrooms and farm colonies, etc., should be started for them. But the deeper note was struck by many of the speakers—that no small remedies will suffice; we want to make the community responsible for each individual's work and wages before the injustice and cruelty and waste of the present system will disappear. The Labour Party's Unemployed Bill is a step in this direction, for under it every man or woman who is out of work can claim employment and wages from the State.

A League member points out to me that I did not mention the subscription to the League last month, and adds: "It is probably much smaller than readers of your article will imagine, considering the benefits to be derived from joining the Women's Labour League." Certainly we put it as low as we well can—2d. a year per member has to be paid to the National League; and most branches fix their local subscriptions at 1d. per month, and pay the annual 2d. out of this. We know that many of the women whose work as members is valuable have not long purses, and we want personal service even more than money. But still, postage and meetings do cost something, and we have to supplement our subscriptions as best we can by sales of work, social gatherings, etc. If anyone is out of reach of a local branch she can join the National branch by paying 1s. a year direct to the National Secretary, Mrs. Middleton, 8, Jedburgh Street, Clapham, London, S.W.

MARGARET E. MACDONALD.

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"Then you understand now the moral of my story about the English tourist."

"Yes; I got out for nothing at a minute's notice. I wish I had joined the Union; I should have been getting unemployed benefit now, and been helped in looking for a new job."

What is the lesson of all this? Is it not foolish to refrain from joining a Union because of the vague hope of escape from the trade at some distant date? Girls should not think too much or too early about marriage. If marriage prospects lead you to neglect your work or to shirk your responsibilities towards the other workers, you might find yourself out of the trade sooner than you expect. Even if you do marry, it is not certain that you will no longer be a wage-earner. The low wages, unemployment, and sickness of husbands compel thousands of wives to be daily breadwinners. Over one million married women are at present employed for wages in Great Britain. Every young single woman who, through lack of organisation, accepts low wages, competes unfairly with men in the labour market, and possibly helps to lower the wages of her future husband, thereby lessening her own chance of a comfortable home.

You know the story of the Yorkshireman:—"Did you ever get even with that lass who took your job at half your wage?" asked a friend whom he had not seen for some time.

Correspondence Circle and Postcard Exchange.

At the request of several readers we are prepared to open a Correspondence Circle and a Bureau for the exchange of Picture Postcards between our readers. All communications should, in the first instance, be accompanied by the coupon below, and addressed:

Circle Editor, Woman Worker, Club Union Buildings, Clerkenwell, London, E.C.

Those who wish to correspond should enclose their name and address, with a nom-de-plume for publication, and state kind of correspondent required, and subject, if any, upon which correspondence is desired.

For instance, "Interested"—Woman (24), living in London, employed as shop assistant, wishes to correspond with someone interested in Trade Unionism, and to exchange experiences. Lancashire Textile Worker preferred.

COUPON WOMAN WORKER. DECEMBER, 1907.

Those who wish to exchange picture postcards should cut out coupon and send name and address, stating what kind of postcards required.

Miss H. Flowers, 130, Rotherfield Street, Essex Road, Islington,

wishes to exchange picture postcards with someone in the Lake District. Would send Actresses.

Miss N. Claten, 53, Albemarle Road, Taunton, Somerset,

would like to exchange picture postcards with someone interested in collecting rustic views, no particular district.

"Get even with her—why, I married her," was the reply, "and now she keeps me and herself as well."

If the just rights of both men and women are to be safeguarded the Union must be made strong. Suppose your own future be assured, have you no helping hand for your fellow-workers, to whom the present is full of care and poverty, and the future dark and unknown?

So long as you remain at your trade it is your privilege and duty to strengthen the Trade Union movement, and thus help to improve the labouring conditions of all.

In the breast of every true woman beats the mother heart. No woman can calmly bear to think that the children of the present and the future will grow up amid squalid surroundings of darkness and shame—will suffer the hardships and privations which she herself may have endured. Every woman wants to feel that her children will have opportunities for happiness, culture, and self-development. Let each girl for her own sake, for the sake of her workmates, and, above all, for the sake of the little children, take her place in the organised labour movement, and thus help to usher in the dawn of a brighter day. Her marriage will not then be embraced as an escape from industrial drudgery. When it comes, it will be based on respect and love, and women will go forward to their new duties better fitted, physically and mentally, to be the mothers of the coming race.

Original Poem by Walter Crane

(Specially written for "THE WOMAN WORKER".)

Rondeau.

On Atlas' top how rests this round
Of pride & glitter gold ^{emerald} ~~emerald~~;
How borne aloft with toil & tears
With aching arm that still up bears
The strain & stress of Labour bound?
With dust of summer highways ground,
Or loth in wintry snows, or found
In chairs that frozen custom wears
On Atlas top.

For you, earth's children, earth disordered,
With hands of might but heads uncurved,
For you, through smokes of trailing years,
Deliverance comes in hope new-found
On Atlas top.

Walter Crane

Our . . .
New . . .
Serial.

"PARTNERS"

By
CONSTANCE HINTON-SMITH.

All Rights Reserved.

[SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER I.—The Committee of the "Morison Concert"—an annual institution held in a large hall lent by the directors of the great wholesale house in Ilchester—find at the last moment that one of the artistes upon whom much depended, has fallen a victim to influenza, and cannot attend. Anxious for the success of the concert, which holds a high place among the entertainments of the town, the committee eagerly discuss the possibility of finding a substitute. Harry Barclay suggests that they might ask George Hillyard, the Labour leader, who is in town on a visit to his mother. The suggestion is agreed to, though several members of the committee are doubtful whether Hillyard can maintain the high level of talent displayed at the Morison concert. Hester Fay, a very pretty shop assistant, employed at a millinery establishment, is particularly dubious as to the result of the experiment. Hillyard, however, consents to come, and, on the evening night, delivered recitations which held the audience spell-bound by their eloquence and power. Hester Fay finds herself strangely moved and swayed by the passionate lines and the eloquent voice. At the end of the concert she consents, on the invitation of her friend, Rose Meakin, to attend a meeting in the Town Hall next night, at which Hillyard is to speak on Trade Unionism and Labour questions.]

CHAPTER II.

They came pouring into the wet, grimy, gas-lit street, some fifteen hundred men and women; and although they were English born and bred, they forgot to grumble at the weather. Umbrellas were opened indeed, and skirts hastily gathered up, but the talk under the umbrellas was not of the streaming pavements or the chance of catching a tram up town. The spell of a great speaker was still on that motley crowd of clerks and factory-workers and school-teachers and shop-assistants, with whom mingled, here and there, a doctor or two, a few parsons, and a sprinkling of well-dressed women of the "leisured" classes. The flame of enthusiasm which had been running high inside the Corn Exchange refused to be quenched by a mere deluge of commonplace rain outside. There had been singularly little conversation on the staircase and in the lobbies when the meeting broke up; feeling had been, for a moment or so, too tense to express itself in words; but now, though some of the women were still engaged in winking away furtive tears, and more than one man had not wholly rid himself of an extraordinary choking sensation in the throat which had affected him inexplicably at intervals during the past half-hour, the general use of tongues had been recovered, and the said tongues were wagging furiously. All along High Street and across Central Square there was an irregular chorus of excited comment.

"Good old Hillyard!"
"Ah, George is a great man! We shall see him in Parliament before he's much older."
"Didn't he give it to the Churches?"
"And to the selfish workers, too—don't you forget that!"
"I thought he was a bit hard on the workers."

"He always is—if you call it hard. George is like me; I never could abide a selfish Trade Unionist. There are some about, though."

"You bet there are—men who never look outside their own trade. Well, Hillyard must have made some of them sit up to-night."

"I didn't know he was such a champion of women."

"Poor souls! It seems they want a champion bad enough. Ever hear anything like those wage-figures he gave us?"

"Women don't work for such wages in Ilchester. I saw some of the girls from Morison's nudging one another and laughing when George talked of four and threepence a week. They thought he was laying it on a bit thick, I suspect."

"And what did you think of it all, Miss Fay?" Charles Maydew inquired of Hester.

Hester started at the question. She was of those whom even transition from the brilliantly-lighted hall, with its rows of eager upturned faces, to the dark and damp unloveliness of an Ilchester December night, had failed to bring down from the heights of an unwonted emotion. In her case the emotion was absolutely new, and therefore, perhaps, the more absorbing. She hesitated so long in replying, while she collected her scattered thoughts, that Rose Meakin, on her left, struck in with—

"What could she think—except that it was magnificent?"
"Magnificent! Yes, I daresay. But it wasn't altogether practical politics."

Maydew's cold fit was setting in. Full of the misgivings natural to an Englishman who has allowed himself to be betrayed into enthusiasm, he took refuge in criticism.

"What do you mean?" said Rose.

"Well, we had him down to talk about our interests, not to discuss the wrongs of the sweated in London and Leeds."

"He thinks their interests ours." Hester spoke for the first time.

"And you agree with him?"

"I? I don't know; I know nothing about the—the practical politics side of it. All I know is—"

She paused.
"Please go on."



"She remembered it afterwards, in the quiet of her own room."

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the wrists, and there is feathering and lace at the neck. I tell you it can't be done, Mr. Perret, for less than threepence halfpenny. It's dirt cheap at that. It takes me four hours 'ard to do one, and then there's thread to pay for."

There's a murmur of sympathy from the waiting women behind.
"Well, three shillin's," says Mr. Perret, suavely.

He waits a moment, but the girl's passion has already waned, and he adds, "You'd better put an extra tuck on the sleeves!"

The Simple Life - - Walt Whitman.
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Complaints and the Law. PORTIA.
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Women's News of the Week.

girls as Mr. Perret. He is the concocter of the specious advertisement and—I discovered—the tenant of a small house at Maida Vale where "Nurse X" resides, in case any wary person should pay a personal visit to inspect the "54 articles elaborately tucked and trimmed."

Mr. Perret is not the originator of this brilliant scheme; that honour belongs to a more prosperous competitor,

* N.B.—The facts contained in this article are vouched for. Names are, of course, fictitious.—Ed.

£50 yearly toward the expenses of an organiser for Bournville, Birmingham, and district.
It was agreed to accept this offer, and to exempt Bournville and Birmingham from the National Organising Scheme.

National Organising Fund.

It was decided to open a National Organising Fund, to which all members who can afford it be asked to contribute id. monthly. It was also agreed that the fund should be augmented by voluntary effort, and that so soon as sufficient money had been collected a permanent National Organiser should be appointed.

Payment of Branch Officials and Collectors.

It was decided that the amount to be paid to branch officials and collectors should be left to local branches to decide in each case for themselves.

Secretary's Salary.

A resolution thanking the secretary for her arduous work

during the past year, and raising her salary to 30s. weekly, was passed unanimously, on the motion of Mrs. Stevenson (Woolwich), seconded by Mrs. Williams (Coventry).
The hope was expressed that the services of Miss Hedges might be more suitably recognised as the membership and financial strength of the organisation increased.

Federation Badge.

A general desire was expressed for a Federation Badge, and the officials were requested to get estimates.

Wives of Working Men.

It was agreed that the wives of working men in sympathy with the objects of the Federation should be eligible for membership, but should not be entitled to sick benefit.

Date of Next Conference.

It was decided to hold the next conference in the first week of October, 1908.

The conference then adjourned, and the delegates partook of a delightful tea, served at Club Union Buildings.

The National Movement.

Most of the reports have been crowded out this month, and we have only room for the following:—

LONDON.—London Tailoresses held a special meeting on Thursday, October 24th, at St. Annes Schools, Soho. We had some very good speakers, who advised all tailoresses to join their Union for their own benefit and that of their fellow-workers. We are going to have a revision of the log, which may alter the present position of the tailor and tailoress. Most of our members are interested in the *Woman Worker*, and think it is very useful. We wish you success in your work.

COVENTRY.—Our November social went off very pleasantly, and though we had no applications for membership at the time, we hear of several who intend to join us when we meet again. We had songs, recitations, and a speech from Mr. Binks, who told us interesting things about a Trade Union which is fifty-six years old—the Amalgamated Society of Engineers—and impressed upon us the need for unity of action. We are almost one year old, and, after the Conference, the next thing we shall be thinking of will be a birthday party.

TAUNTON.—Arrangements are being made for a dance on December 25th, and we hope to be able to report a very successful time. We are keeping steadily on, but hope for a rush of new members soon. The *Woman Worker* has a good sale here, and is read with much pleasure and interest. A few are already eager to join the Postcard Exchange. We are pleased to see that other branches are making such good headway, and do not despair of overtaking them.

CLERKENWELL.—The meeting on November 6th was very satisfactory, resulting in the increase of the membership of the branch. We are rather afraid, from what we have heard from the "little bird," that there will not be sufficient room at the office at Club Union Buildings for all those who wish to come to the social on the 27th. We are all feeling very much encouraged and quite "fit" for the work which we have planned out for the winter months.

EDMONTON.—The much-talked-of Anniversary Social is now a thing of the past. We are glad to report that it

was a great success. Mr. C. W. Bowerman, M.P., occupied the chair, supported by Miss Gertrude Tuckwell, Miss Macarthur, Mrs. Pete Curran, and Councillor Hayday. Miss Tuckwell congratulated the members on their splendid position, dwelling on the fact that wherever the organisers of the Women's Trade Union movement went, they always referred to the Edmonton Branch of the Federation as a splendid example of the unity which should exist amongst the women workers. Miss Macarthur and Mrs. Curran both congratulated the members on their success. Then followed the event of the evening: Miss Ada Gurden, on behalf of the members, presented Miss Macarthur with a beautiful gold watch bearing her monogram and the inscription, "With love from Eley's girls." Miss Macarthur, in thanking the members for their kindly appreciation of her work, said she should value the inscription on the watch even more than the watch itself. It was very pleasing to all present to hear the delightful speech which Mr. J. D. Macarthur—himself an employer of labour, who was paying a hurried visit to London—made in connection with the position of a Trade Union, and the benefits which both employer and employed gained through this medium. After the speeches were ended a concert, terminating with a dance, finished this most happy and delightful evening.

BATH.—A branch was started here as a result of the Trade Union Congress and Miss Macarthur's visit in September last, and since then the membership shows a small increase. We are looking forward to Miss Hedges' visit in December; the girls are working very bravely. The branch is much indebted to Miss Tollemache, a lady visitor, who helps in all possible ways to further the movement in Bath, and we are expecting great success by the New Year.

SILVERTOWN.—The Silvertown Branch had a very successful social, which was held at Tate Institute. We were disappointed Miss Macarthur being unable to take the chair for us, but welcomed Mrs. Curran, who gave a short address during the evening. We have some splendid artists among our members who were very willing to do all in their power to please everybody. Everything turned out very satisfactory, and altogether a very enjoyable evening was spent.

PRIZE OFFERS.

NO ENTRANCE FEE.

SHORT STORY PRIZE - 10s.

We offer a prize of 10s. for the best bright and humorous story, not exceeding 1,000 words in length. The story may be woven round any subject.

"MY AIM IN LIFE" PRIZE - 5s.

We offer another prize of 5s. for the best letter of not more than 300 words on above subject. Tell us about yourself, what your hopes and ambitions are, what you would like to be and do. Tell us your aim in life.

COOKING RECIPE PRIZE - 5s.

A prize of 5s. will be awarded for the best cooking recipe or home hint sent in.

PRIZE AWARDS.

SHORT STORY PRIZE - 10s.

divided between EDITH M. BAKER, 2, Woodhouse Road, North Finchley, and ANNE L. GARDNER, 82, Brunshaw Road, Burnley.

COOKING RECIPE PRIZE - 5s.

has been won by Mrs. E. SEWELL, 88, Queen's Road, Aston, Birmingham, whose recipe for Macaroni Cheese appears under Home Hints.

"MY DAY'S WORK" PRIZE - 5s.

Two prizes of 5s. each awarded to MIMI BRODIE, 40, Burghley Road, Highgate Road, N.W., and M. A. H., Liverpool.

WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE.

Office:
Club Union Buildings, Clerkenwell Road, London, E.C.
Chairman: Miss Gertrude Tuckwell.
Secretary: Miss Mary Macarthur.
OPEN DAILY FROM 10 TO 5.

OBJECTS:

- A. ORGANISATION. The League is willing to send organisers to any London or provincial district to form new or strengthen existing Trade Unions.
- B. LEGISLATION. The League acts as the agent of women Trade Unionists in making representations to Government Authorities, or Parliamentary Committees, with regard to their legislative requirements, or in bringing forward specific grievances in individual trades or factories, by means of questions and representations by Members of Parliament in the House of Commons. Complaints as to grievances and breaches of the Factory and Workshops Acts, when sent to the League, are investigated carefully, and referred to the proper quarters. Cases under the Compensation, Truck, and other industrial laws referred to the League, are investigated, and advice given by the Secretary of the Legal Advice Department, and the League's legal advisers.
- C. SOCIAL WORK. The League arranges entertainments and weekly club nights, and social evenings for members and their friends.

GOOD NEWS FOR OUR READERS.

Articles, Stories, Sketches, Poems, etc.

Our list of future contributors includes the following well-known public men and women:

- Meredith Atkinson, Keble College, Oxford.
- Wm. C. Anderson.
- Geo. N. Barnes, M.P. (Secretary Amalgamated Soc. Engineers).
- Bishop of Birmingham.
- Clementina Black.
- Robert Blatchford, Editor the "Clarion."
- Margaret G. Bondfield (Assistant Secretary Shop Assistants' Union).
- Herbert Burrows.
- J. R. Clynes, M.P. (Secretary Oldham Trades Council).
- Pete Curran, M.P. (Chairman General Federation Trade Unions).
- Walter Crane.
- Rt. Hon. Sir Chas. W. Dilke, Bart., M.P.
- R. C. K. Ensor, M.A.
- A. H. Gill, M.P. (Secretary Provincial Assoc. Spinners and Piecers).
- Victor Grayson, M.P.
- Geo. Haw (Author "No Room to Live").
- J. Keir Hardie, M.P. (Chairman Labour Party).
- Dennis Hird (Principal, Ruskin College, Oxford).
- Arthur Henderson, M.P. (Whip Labour Party).
- Canon Scott Holland (Editor "Commonwealth").
- George Lansbury (Poplar Board of Guardians).
- The Hon. Charles Lister (Baliol College, Oxford).
- L. G. Chiozza Money, M.P. (Author of "Riches and Poverty").
- C. F. G. Masterman, M.P.
- Margaret Macmillan.
- W. Pett Ridge (Author "Mord Em'ly," "Name of Garland" etc., etc.)
- Constance Hinton-Smith.
- George S. Street (Author "The Autobiography of a Boy").
- Gertrude Tuckwell (Chairman Woman's Trade Union League).
- Richard Whiteing (Author of "No. 5 John Street").
- P. W. Wilson, M.P.
- Stephen Walsh, M.P.
- William Walker (Labour Candidate North Belfast).

Future issues will contain Prize Competitions for our readers, Home Hints and Recipes, Answers to Correspondents, Legal Advice, a Monthly Record of the Women's Trade Union Movement. Will our readers assist us in helping to make the Magazine more widely known, thus extending its scope and usefulness? To be obtained post free, 1/6 per annum from the publishers National Federation of Women Workers, Club Union Buildings, Clerkenwell Road, London, E.C.; or can be ordered through any Newsagent. Wholesale Agents: W. H. Smith & Sons; Wyman's, Fetter Lane, London, E.C. and John Heywood, Manchester. Special Agent for South London: Fred Carlton, 110, Summer Road, Peckham, S.E.

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* N.B.—The facts contained in this article are vouched for. Names are, of course, fictitious.—Ed.

THE CLAIMS OF IRELAND. BIRKBECK BANK,

What are the industrial questions that agitate the Irish workers? Some light was thrown on this problem by a deputation which waited on Mr. Birrell at Dublin Castle on November 11th. The deputation, which represented 100,000 organised Irish wage-earners, visited the Chief Secretary for the purpose of acquainting him with certain of the industrial aims of the Irish Trade Union Congress. Their programme as unfolded by the various members of the deputation included (1) reform of the Poor Law and a scheme of Old Age Pensions; (2) reform of the railway system on the lines of State ownership; (3) enforcement of Fair Wage Resolutions and Abolition of Sweating; (4) cottage hospitals for sick workers; (5) compulsory State insurance.

One of the deputation was Miss Galway, of Belfast, secretary of the Irish Workers Union. In introducing her, Mr. E. L. Richardson, hon. secretary Irish Trades Congress, remarked that the Irish Congress had gone ahead of the English in having elected a woman to the Parliamentary Committee. Mr. Birrell replied that he was very glad to hear it, and expressed his belief that women had not been given the place to which they were entitled in these islands.

Miss Galway urged the need for appointing additional Factory Inspectors, and for carrying out additional factory legislation. She complained of the sanitary conditions, accommodation, and ventilation in the mills and factories in the North of Ireland. Truck Laws should more stringently be put into operation, and living-in for shop assistants abolished. To the various points raised Mr. Birrell replied in guarded official language. He admitted, however, that the number of Factory Inspectors was quite inadequate, and promised to direct the attention of the Home Secretary to the matter.

THE CONFIRMED BACHELOR.

At Cupid's shrine I worshipped,
But now I only scoff.
I fell in love with the telephone girl;
Alas, she cut me off!

And then I met the chorus girl,
As stylish as a queen.
I asked her to be mine; she said—
"You're not on in this scene!"

The girl behind the counter next
I tried without demur.
She smiled, but said—"I'm not in
The h'art department, sir!"

I thought I'd booked the cycling girl
(I'd chosen her at random,
Being desperate). Alas! it seemed
She didn't care for "tandem!"

I might have gained the typist's hand,
But didn't try to win it,
Because I found she wrote—and talked
A hundred words a minute!

The circus girl quite put me off.
When we'd fixed up the thing
She jilted me, but wrote to say
She's sticking to "the ring"!

REGINALD RIGBY, in *The Story-Teller*.

BIRKBECK BANK,

ESTABLISHED 1851.

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2 PER CENT. INTEREST

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C. F. RAVENSCROFT, Secretary.

"AN APPALLING INDICTMENT!"

(Manchester City News, in a leading article.)

"THE MORAL SIDE OF LIVING-IN"

By T. SPENCER JONES

(Editor of "The Shop Assistant").

THIS "TELLING BOOK" is selling in thousands,
40 pp. Price ONE PENNY. Post Free 1½d.

MISS MARY R. MACARTHUR says:—

"All Social Reformers should make it their business to read this thoroughly workmanlike pamphlet. . . . Mr. Jones has much to say of dark and serious import."

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Yearly, 50 Cents.

THE SOCIALIST WOMAN,
619, EAST 55TH STREET, CHICAGO, U.S.A.

Dr. ALLINSON'S FOOD for Babies

No other food can equal it. THE ONLY KNOWN ROYAL TWINS—viz., those of Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse, who are nephews to King Edward VII.—were reared on it, and it is sent regularly to them. FOR SUFFERERS from Stomach Troubles, such as Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Gastric Catarrh, Ulcer of the Stomach, and Wasting Diseases, it is the best and cheapest known. It has been the means of many thousands being restored to health, strength, and ability to work. A baby's digestive powers are very limited, and it is therefore one of the primary essentials of robust growth and development that the child should take food which is capable of easy assimilation. The ignorance of this fact is the chief reason for the alarming mortality amongst young children. A long and special study of this great question resulted in the introduction of DR. ALLINSON'S NATURAL FOOD. The great food specialist designed this preparation with a view to imparting the maximum amount of nutrition to children at a minimum expenditure of digestive energy. It is NOURISHING and SUSTAINING in the HIGHEST DEGREE. Makes flesh, muscle, bone and brain.

Dr. ALLINSON'S FOOD FOR BABIES

IS SOLD BY

Chemists, Grocers, Bakers, Corn Dealers, Co-operative Stores and others,
in 3d., 6d., 1s., 2s. 6d. and 5s. Tins.

If any difficulty in obtaining it, a 1s. or 2s. 6d. tin containing 4lbs. weight will be sent carriage paid, on receipt of remittance value 1s. or 2s. 6d. by

THE NATURAL FOOD COMPANY, LTD.,
(Room 210) 305, Cambridge Road, Bethnal Green, London, E.

THE SAFEST MEDICINE

For Bilious and Liver Complaints, Indigestion, Wind, Nervous Depression, Loss of Appetite, Irritability, Lassitude, Dyspepsia, Heartburn, Lowness of Spirits, Giddiness, &c.

AS A GENERAL FAMILY APERIENT MEDICINE

Dr. SCOTT'S PILLS

ARE UNEQUALLED.

Composed of the Finest Drugs. Gentle and Tonic in their action. Certain in their Curative effects. They can be taken at any time, without inconvenience.

They cleanse the Stomach from all impurities. They Stimulate the Liver to healthy action.

They Strengthen the Nervous System, restore and preserve

HEALTH, STRENGTH, AND VITALITY.

Sold by all Chemists in Boxes, 1/1½; and three times the quantity, 2/9.

A FREE SAMPLE BOX

Will be sent to all who write, enclosing a penny stamp to cover postage (mentioning this paper), to

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Complaints and the Law.

PORTIA.

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Trade Union Notes

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Mrs. J. R. MacDONALD.

Women's News of the Week.

girls as Mr. Perret. He is the concocter of the specious advertisement and—I discovered—the tenant of a small house at Maida Vale where "Nurse X" resides, in case any wary person should pay a personal visit to inspect the "54 articles elaborately tucked and trimmed."

Mr. Perret is not the originator of this brilliant scheme; that honour belongs to a more prosperous competitor,

* N.B.—The facts contained in this article are vouched for. Names are, of course, fictitious.—Ed.

the wrists, and there is feathering and lace at the neck. I tell you it can't be done, Mr. Perret, for less than three-pence halfpenny. It's dirt cheap at that. It takes me four hours' hard to do one, and then there's thread to pay for."

There's a murmur of sympathy from the waiting women behind.

"Well, three shillin's," says Mr. Perret, suavely.

He waits a moment, but the girl's passion has already waned, and he adds, "You'd better put an extra tuck on the sleeves!"

ER

ENNY.

n, Leeds, Not-
who conduct
r lines.

's busy time.
a wait in a row
contents of their

ese 'ere gowns
customers, Mrs.
y to one of
oking women.

Why, it ain't
artic'ler about
rite."

I don't make
ar for that lot,
the woman

do with strite
Perret with
this time, Mis.
a penny-three
are there?—a

oney dazedly.
he had counted
y at the door.
haps, of her
"down with

w unties her
f linen on the
the garments

shilling.
owns three and

s a shilling."
n over. The
unts as much,

s lot—five and
are payin' too
ires," he says.
ore at two au

ries the girl
arment in her
h astonishing
three tucks
Five tucks and
eeves. There's
ten tucks and
ll with feather-
underneath as
feathering at



OVERHEARD
BY
THE LITTLE BIRD.

At Norwich.

That some of our members took part in the municipal elections.

At the same Place.

"Canvassing is good sport!"

At Edmonton.

The Anniversary Social was a grand success.

At the same Place.

Something always goes wrong with the Band.

At Eley Bros.

That some of the new patent machines are a profit neither to the firm or the workers.

At Jarrow.

That a town official has publicly stated that there are no hungry children in Jarrow.

At the same Place.

That the Women's Labour League has a good local branch and a most excellent secretary.

At Club Union Buildings.

The Annual Conference was a great success. The two most eloquent delegates came from Edinburgh and Coventry.

At the same Place.

That our branches ought to be proud of their representatives.

That Miss McCarron came all the way from Derry, and was ill in consequence.

At Birmingham.

That a special organiser is to be appointed by the Federation for this district.

At Bournville.

"Let them all come."

At Oxford.

That we mean business.

At Banbury.

That the Manager and Manageress turned out to our meeting.

"The Tower of Babel" is not in it.

At the same Place.

That a strong branch of the Federation has been formed.

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