

OCTOBER—DECEMBER
1899.

"SHAFTS": Price, 6d. post free.

Annual Subscription, Country and Abroad, 4s.

Offices: Oswaldestre House, Norfolk St., Strand, London, W.C.

Vol. 7. No 3.

PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS—Oswaldestre House, Norfolk St., Strand, London, W.C.

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SHAFTS

A PAPER FOR WOMEN

THE WORKING CLASSES

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EDITED BY

MARGARET SHURMER SIBTHORP

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OH, SWIFTLY SPEED, YE SHAFTS OF LIGHT
WHILE HOSTS OF DARKNESS FLY
FAIR BREAKS THE DAWN: FAST ROLLS THE NIGHT
FROM WOMAN'S DARKENED SKY.



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EDITED BY MARGARET SHURMER SIBTHORP.

Shoot thine own arrow right through the earthly tissue
 Bravely; and leave the Gods to find the issue."—GOETHE.

VOL. VII. OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1899. No. 3.

What the Editor Means.

To the Readers of SHAFTS

DEAR FRIENDS,—In the November of 1892 SHAFTS began its existence; in the November of the present year it will have completed its seventh year of that uphill work, so well known to journalists especially those who work on lines of reform. Briefly, I wish to emphasize the fact that I cannot go on without some help. Many hard struggles have compelled me to adopt a plan to save SHAFTS from ceasing to be published, as other women's papers have ceased. I have decided to publish it quarterly, for a time at least.

There is to-day a greater need than ever of a regularly published Woman's Journal, dealing specially with every subject connected with Woman's life, and with the absolute rebellion against the tyranny and injustices of the past which she has taken up; openly and fearlessly advocating the utmost reform, and in a noble and generous spirit waking woman to a sense of her power, her possibilities, and her position in the scale of Being. Such has been the aim of SHAFTS in the past; this, heavily handicapped, it has striven to do; this it will continue to do, if assistance can be given; if it can be supported by the united efforts of its readers.

It is my profound conviction that it is the bounden duty of every woman who understands, even partially, the need of reform, to help to support a woman's paper. No paper advocating reform will pay, it has to work against the tide, and must be assisted by the combined efforts of the reformers whose opinions, intentions, and desires it represents. Still more is this true of a woman's paper, advocating, as it does, a reform against which the most bitter and determined opposition is brought to bear. It is therefore absolutely imperative that towards a woman's paper the eyes of all progressive women should be turned; it should be supported generously by women's clubs, and by societies of women; it should not be allowed to struggle through years of hard, unremunerated work and then to die.

I began SHAFTS full of hope, and strength of enthusiasm, trusting that women would support me. During the six or seven years of storm and stress, through which I have dragged it, I have been helped faithfully and nobly by four persons, to whose great kindness is due the fact that it has not ceased to be published. SHAFTS has now lost three of these friends, one through a failure of the power to help which once existed, the others through what we call Death. But the blessing of these two is with me and I trust it will influence many to help me.

In recent years we have, with deep regret, witnessed the closing of five women's papers in England, Australia and America. Are we to witness also the death of SHAFTS? To save it I adopt the plan of making it a quarterly until I see my way to do more. It will be, I trust, all that it has been hitherto; it will be more possibly, than as yet I have, from want of funds, been able to accomplish. I shall endeavour to fill also the gap made by the much to be regretted stopping of the *Woman's Signal*, and it will give besides, some other new features, a complete tale in each number, and correspondence from interested friends at home and abroad. I shall continue it as a quarterly until I find that I receive the necessary support to enable me to return to the monthly publication.

I have had a great number of letters of enquiry from former readers of the *Woman's Signal*, I hope these will prove earnest friends and generous supporters. Proposals have been made to me by different gentlemen who invite my co-operation in schemes for new papers, but none of these promise to be what I think a woman's paper should be, nor do I think, saving under very exceptional circumstances, that a paper edited by a man ever can be quite satisfactory as

a woman's paper. I have therefore declined these schemes. I shall give myself to the end of this year to prove whether women are yet sufficiently in earnest to help me. What I shall do in future will depend upon that. Probably I shall continue to publish the quarterly, but I have spent myself, as well as my money in these six or seven years, and I doubt if I can go through many more years of such conflict. A combined effort on the part of women in clubs and societies, and as readers, will give all the help required, without pressing upon any.

In the above circular letter, sent to subscribers recently, and quoted here, I have explained, I think sufficiently, my enforced silence; also, I have stated my conviction that women must help to support a woman's paper, as a woman's paper will not pay. While the work for woman's emancipation and the forcing of closed doors call aloud for help on all sides SHAFTS does not take kindly to enforced silence, and chafes at the fact that want of funds should have so sorely hindered its work. It is hardly to our credit as women that a paper which has contrived to exist through seven years of storm and stress of unfavourable weather should still be unendowed, when so many women are so able to support it.

Can there be any desolation more desolate than that which crushes the strong soul and drives it to gaze down into the awful abyss of despair, when, lifting a radiant gaze out of the depths of its own fulness, from which it has been pouring great draughts of life, it suddenly perceives that, like prophet of olden time, it has been stretching out hands to an unheeding people. What anguish must have dashed over the prophet soul in great billows of woe! Is there any sorrow like unto this, that walleth out its bitter grief and pain because of work and toil, and output of soul apparently all in vain?

Success comes to the strong spirit, working in faith in itself; but such success may not be, seldom is, in what the world calls its *good things*. It comes in the shape of the awakening of souls, the overthrow of tyrannies, the shuddering into non-existence of every form of cruelty, lust, hatred and bitterness. Well for those who seek these high results and are content. The current coin of the lower kingdom seems a small thing compared to this hope, yet we need the current coin, and so in our diverse needs the sympathy between the planes of our being are kept alive and the correspondences perfect, for this also is needful.

In the last issue of this paper I appealed as earnestly as I dared for help. Help came from one, it saved me from giving up for I was completely broken down in health by my long struggle. My rest has recuperated my strength, though hardly in time for the use of the present issue. SHAFTS has now fairly begun its career as a quarterly. I hope that this form of issue may only be a temporary matter, and that soon it will be re-issued as a monthly. The good it is doing makes it a duty to be patient and hopeful and to wait. Owing to the timely aid received after last issue from a true friend of women, I have been enabled to pay up all debts and to start clear, though with an exchequer sadly and seriously in need of replenishing. Immediate help is most urgently wanted. There is an urgent demand for some definite help from a true soul able and willing, the help, namely of a gift of £200, or £300, to be paid yearly to the SHAFTS exchequer at the rate of £100 yearly, for one or two years. If this could be done it would enable me to do what I contemplate, and put SHAFTS on an established footing. But I appeal and appeal in vain. A sufficient number of subscribers to guarantee this sum yearly would answer the purpose even better. Will all my readers send forth their best wishes and use their active endeavours to bring about these conditions before the year 1899 has run its course, and 1900 has begun its life and its renewed hope.

SHAFTS will begin, in December or January next, its new life as a quarterly, as fully announced above and in previous issues.

Every help that comes will be welcome, and in any form. Letters and articles on any subject will be carefully considered, and if suitable, accepted with many thanks. Let us all hope that the coming year may be one of great success, and let us strive by our own actions to make it so.

All rules and directions will appear in the January number of SHAFTS for 1900. I ask all my readers to note the new address, and to write direct to the office, Oswaldestre House, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.

Lectures and discussions to be held in the offices will be arranged for in the beginning of the New Year.

There are many ways by which SHAFTS may be helped. Among others, all organised societies of women might be induced to become subscribers, and any individual member might work to bring this about.

Married Women's Notes.

AN IMPORTANT DECISION

A BATTLE in regard to the right of married women occupiers in Hampstead to exercise the local franchise has lately been fought and won.

A lady in that district who owns the house in which she lives and who pays all rates and taxes thereto attached out of her separate estate desired to be placed upon the rate-book as a first step towards obtaining the right to vote in Guardian, Vestry, and School Board elections. Her husband, although residing with her, had the Parliamentary vote in another district, and the wife claimed that under the Local Government Act of 1894 (Clause 43) which for the purposes of that Act removed disqualification from married women, she was entitled to recognition as a rate-payer.

The rate-collector, while accepting her cheque, refused to give her a receipt in her own name, and the claimant therefore appealed to the overseers. They, guided by the advice of their clerk, who is also Clerk and Solicitor to the Vestry and Clerk to the local Guardians, endorsed the action of the collector and refused the receipt.

The lady then objected to part with her money without a proper acknowledgment, with the result that the husband was summoned to show cause why the rates had not been paid. He referred the magistrates to his wife, who, he contended, had offered the money again and again on condition that she received a legal discharge for such payment. The Bench, again guided by the Vestry Clerk, made an order on the husband for payment of the rates, and refused to recognise the wife as occupier.

The Women's Local Government Society then took up the case, and legal advice was taken. The lady rate-payer was informed that she was acting strictly within her legal rights in demanding to be placed on the rate-book, and it was decided to carry the matter before the Revising Barrister, who, upon assuring himself that the lady was, in fact, owner and occupier of the house, at once reversed the Justices' decision and that of the overseers, and decided that as occupier of her own house she had a perfect right to the privileges attached.

An important victory has therefore been won for married women occupiers in Hampstead, and the Women's Local Government Society may be congratulated upon such an encouraging result.

Civil Disabilities of Women as to Custody and Guardianship of Children.

A Speech of MR. SVEND NIGSTRO, M.P., at the International Congress of Women in London (Legislative and Industrial Section) on June 29th, 1899.

I AM very afraid that the paper I have written and should read here, is too long to be read in the ten minutes granted me. I therefore prefer instead of risking to be cut off in the midst of the paper, to lay it quite aside and give you a short view of the question without any paper.

Concerning women's disabilities as to custody and guardianship of children, there is—according to Danish law—to be distinguished between their own and other people's children. A woman can never be guardian of a child who is *not* her own. Of course, all children under eighteen years must have a guardian—may be their parents or somebody else, but only a man will be put on that place. A different thing is, that when a child is put at nurse with a stranger the magistrates have to appoint a surveyor or superintendent to take care of it, and on this place they may put a woman (if she is willing), but the right of such a woman is not a guardian. She only can look after the child, and if something wrong is done against it, she can go and tell the man; but give any command or order of her own, no!

As to a woman's *own* children a distinction must be made between their fortune and their personal affairs. A mother will never be trusted with the administration of her children's *fortune*. Also here only a man will do. With regard to the *personal affairs* of the child (*i.e.*, its nursing, education, instruction, etc.) its mother *can* be trusted with the guardianship, but here again an important distinction must be drawn between the married mother and the unmarried. The mother of an illegitimate child has all the paternal right and power of it. Against her the father has no right of the child at all. He has the duty to share with her the costs as concerning the nursing, education and instruction of the child, at least the half, but that as long as the mother is alive and able to take care of it, he has nothing to do with the child itself.

As to the *married mother* and her children the case is entirely the reverse. Against her husband she has no right of the children at all. Of duties she has plenty. The legislators do not forget women as to the burdens of family as well as social and public life. I dare say so, while I am one of them myself. The mother has the same duty of supporting her child as her husband. But the guardianship as well as the paternal power on the whole belongs to the latter. He can deprive the mother of her child, send it away from home to another country or elsewhere, even the baby. Of course, the mother has the right—if she can procure the necessary money—to go out in the wide world and search for the sent-away child, but then she has to leave her home and the other children. And as the father has the greatest right and power, he has the smaller one to discriminate how the children are to be nursed, educated, instructed and so on—all without any control at all. As long as he does not maltreat the child to such a degree that he falls under the criminal law, nobody has the right of interfering, not even on request of the mother.

First, *after dissolution* of the marriage, may be by divorce or death, the right of the mother awakes. As widow the mother will get the full paternal power of all her children, and by divorce the same will be the case as to those children who are given to her—according to rules which I have no opportunity to describe now.

That is the position which by Danish law is given to the married mother—the queen of her sex, or even—as I am inclined to say—of mankind at all. It is in my opinion not according to the dignity of her, neither to the dignity of the legislators.

There was still much more to say on this subject, but I will stop here.

Failure.

A LARGE mass of deserving and interesting humanity must be, under our present system, failures. Middle-aged women born as ladies are especially apt to fall into the class of failures in the eye of the world and of their collaterals. Ancient nations resorted to female infanticide. This is rightly repugnant to our notions! but we have not yet solved the grave difficulty, after having preserved the body, of making sure that we have not killed the spirit. A failure may be defined as a person who does not get what he or she tries for, or, worse still, who is too depressed to try at all. Now there has been only one thing to try for, provided for women of the well-to-do class—marriage—and it is still undeniable and will never be gainsaid, that when you have won and enjoyed the faithful love of an honorable and unselfish man you may say to yourself with truth—

“Fade then and fall
“Thou hast had all
“That life can give.”

This is the ideal; but the great mass must fall short of the very best, and that certainly not by their own fault. Middle-aged women born as ladies are generally not rich, or beautiful, or powerful, or in any way picturesque, or able to *pose*, as, for instance, a young mother and her baby can.

We may divide women into two classes: the woman who stands alone, and the woman hooked on to a man, or a family. This is a truer cleavage than to speak of married and unmarried women; for a spinster sister living alone with a brother, or a daughter grown-up and living alone with her father, is very much in the same position as a childless wife and maiden aunt with a bevy of nephews and nieces to see to; is not very differently placed from a widow with a young family on her hands.

The solitary woman without the foliage of her family stands out more conspicuously a failure in the eye of the world than her sister surrounded by olive branches.

“My lot in life to live alone
In mine own world of interests,
Much felt but little shown,”

is what many a lonely middle-aged woman truly recognises as her “sphere”;

“A life
With large results so little rife,”

that it is felt to be a failure, a mere existence, almost a vegetation. The western world seems getting more and more full of obscure clever women, who are only cheered by the wintriest of smiles from their fellow-creatures.

Let us examine some of the commonest reasons of the failures of middle-aged ladies from the worldly point of view (other than accidents, bad health, or an unusually poor equipment to start with):

- (1) Incapacity to make their family take their point of view;
- (2) A weak sense of property or accumulation (the reverse of a “having” disposition);
- (3) Powerlessness to make their fellow creatures do their menial work, and so reserve them for higher things;
- (4) Not feeling sure about *how*, *when* and *where* they are to express themselves;
- (5) Being deprived of a medium or organ of expression so as to make their voice heard;

(6) Allowing their ideas to be appropriated by others without acknowledgment;

(7) Absence of dramatic force and vivacity, so that their statements do not “tell.”

I give these few examples out of countless others to show how creditable often are the reasons for worldly failure, resolving themselves mainly to an absence of the grabbing instinct, or to an over-modest and too scrupulous disposition. Priceless rarities of mind may thus be hidden away under a spectacled and wrinkled exterior, unknown not only to the world at large, but even to their possessor.

What is success? Is it not to receive more than we give, to earn the wages of a specialist when we have not cured, and ever afterwards to appear small? How often do successful people become mere windbags on eminences, flies on coachwheels, figure-heads, automata, dummies, nay even obstructives and reactionaries.

But suppose the decorated and titled world of officialdom is really efficacious and hardworking.

“Not milder is the general lot
Because their spirits have forgot,
In action’s dizzying eddy whirl’d,
The something that infects the world.”

How often do we hear the successful person parroting inanely

“All’s right with the world,”

simply because all’s right with *him*? And still oftener do we find him attributing the misfortunes of the unsuccessful to their vices, just as bishops go to workhouses and harangue the inmates on “Thrift.” The great bulk of unsuccessful ladies have no vices except that dreadfully common one of poverty, the greatest of all. The unsuccessful lead a dignified life of obscurity, and never have guns fired off when they move; nor do they wear fortunes on their backs, or receive thousands of telegrams from strangers on their birthdays; the newspapers do not chronicle microscopic facts as to whether they chew their food deliberately or scamp that necessary process. The public does not care at all if they are thinking of Hermes Trismegistus or merely of filling the coal-scuttle; whether they are reading the *Sunday at Home*, or Swinburne’s poems. The unsuccessful person is never belittled by fulsome praise and biographies.

If he or she does a fine action it is known only to the doer of it. In fact the very finest acts of self-sacrifice must, from their nature, always remain secret.

“It is by God decreed
Fame shall not satisfy the highest need.”

Tolstoi defines life as “giving more than you receive”—is not this also a definition of failure? Therefore those who live most truly, without sucking out the goodness or picking the brains of their neighbours, must be failures, for they give more than they receive.

It is an absolute certainty that sufferings join you to humanity, while success divides you from it. T. Hardy talks of “the *alienating* radiance of obvious superiority.” He has in his novels several good remarks on failure, besides being a writer who has a rare gift for its delineation.

“THE DEVOTED FAIL.”

“Nobody’s life is altogether a failure. Anybody’s life may be just as romantic and strange and interesting if he or she fails, as if he or she succeed. All the difference is, that the last chapter is wanting in the story. If a man of power tries to do a

great deed, and just falls short of it by an accident, not his fault, up to that time his history had as much in it as that of a great man who has done his deed. It is whimsical of the world to hold that particulars of how a lad went to school and so on should be as an interesting romance or as nothing to them, precisely in proportion to his after renown."

It is a pity that we cannot judge people in the same disinterested way that we judge the characters of fiction. In fiction we see the full beauty of failure, and we are able to disentangle the causes of it, and to see that failure brings no real discredit. Who does not prefer Marty South, who had to sell her hair, and is left with only a dead lover who loved another, to Marcella with her lord and a gigantic income? [£30,000 a year, and her own estate besides.] Is not Clare Doria Forey far more lovable than Marcella? Is not Elfride sweeter? Is not Clara Middleton a much pleasanter person to live with? Yet in *real life* we, alas! should certainly have passed all these failures over for Marcella with her title, rich and powerful, and able to be of service to us *if we pleased her*. As long as people remain in books, where their riches cannot be utilised, we see them in their true light; but when wearing the manacles of time and space as we do, we get them quite out of focus, because we cease to consider them from a disinterested point of view.

As Thoreau says, "Life is not habitually seen from any common platform so truly and unexaggeratedly as in the light of literature."

There is one thing which a successful person can never be, and that is—

"A nerve o'er which do creep
The else unfelt oppressions of this earth."

Only pain and loss, disappointment and failure, and practising the great art of Doing Without, can give us any largeness of view, or great delicacy of feeling. The poet who wrote my last quotation was one of the greatest of Nerves himself. He also gave the very best axiom for failures:—"Pursue the gradual path of an aspiring change."

DOLE.

Thought Suggestion.

"ERARD was not without the male satisfaction in bearing rule over women. He was tranquil over mere flesh and blood. He preferred to own her mind rather than her person. The delight of binding her will, of leading her across the laws of convention, of conquering *her*, was keener to him than any vulgar emotion of possession."
—*The Gospel of Freedom*.

IN the present day when "suggestion" by hypnotic power is used against women in place of the coarser manifestation of physical force, such a remark as the above is not one to be passed over without careful consideration.

The following note on "suggestion," and the best method of living unsubdued to its influence, is worthy of any woman's attention: the sender having tested the truth under circumstances that might otherwise have been most disastrous:

"Suggestion is the transference of the molecular motions of one brain to another, in the same way as one string communicates its vibrations to another string in its neighbourhood, or a heated iron rod when held close to a cold one, imparts to the latter the motions of its own molecules."

The International Council of Women,

As delineated by the President, THE COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN.

THE International Council of Women is a federation of National Councils or Unions of women formed in various countries for the promotion of unity and mutual understanding between all associations of women working for the common welfare of the community.

The preamble to the Constitution indicates the main bond of union which unites the members of the International Council. It runs as follows:

"We, women of all Nations, sincerely believing that the best good of humanity will be advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy, and purpose, and that an organised movement of women will best conserve the highest good of the family and of the State, do hereby band ourselves together in a confederation of workers, to further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom, and law."

THE GOLDEN RULE.—Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you.

The objects of the International Council are:

- (1) To provide a means of communication between women's organisations in all countries.
- (2) To provide opportunities for women to meet together from all parts of the world to confer upon questions relating to the welfare of the family and the commonwealth.

It must always be remembered that "this International Council is organised in the interest of no one propaganda, and has no power over its members beyond that of suggestion and sympathy; therefore, no National Council voting to become a member of the International Council shall thereby render itself liable to be interfered with in respect to its complete organic unity, independence, or methods of work, or shall be committed to any principle or method of any other Council, or to any utterance or act of this International Council, beyond compliance with the terms of this Constitution.

The formation of the International Council of Women is due to a company of earnest American women, who, after consultation with friends in England and France, decided to convene a representative assembly of delegates from as many countries as possible at Washington, in 1888, to consider the possibility of organising International and National Councils of Women. It elected Mrs. Fawcett as its first President, Miss Clara Barton of the Red Cross Society as its Vice-President, and Mrs. Foster Avery as its Corresponding Secretary.

On the same occasion the National Council of Women of the United States was formed, with Miss Francis Willard as its President.

For five years after its inception the International Council as such did not make any definite move forward. But in 1893 the International Council accepted the invitation of the Women's Branch of the World's Congresses held in connection with the Chicago World's Fair to hold its quinquennial meeting in Chicago. Moreover, the National Council of Women of the United States made itself responsible for the entertainment of all duly accredited representatives from foreign countries during the session of the International Council in Chicago. It was calculated that women workers belonging to over thirty different nation-

alities responded to this hospitable invitation, many of them being present in an official sense, and the result of this meeting of the International Council was that a large number of those present returned to their own countries pledged to form National Councils of Women in harmony with the Constitution of the International Council, and which, in process of time, should form part of that body.

The present officers were elected at this meeting, with the exception of Miss Teresa F. Wilson, who, having already been brought in touch with many of the Councils, was appointed Corresponding Secretary in succession to Mrs. Eva McLaren, who resigned on account of ill-health in January, 1897.

Two meetings of the Executive Committee have since been held in London, the results of whose deliberations were laid before the Meeting of the International Council, which took place in London at the end of June, 1899.

National Councils of Women have been formed in the United States, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland, New Zealand, New South Wales, and Italy. In several other countries the movement is taking shape—for instance, in France, Holland, Denmark, Belgium, Finland, and Switzerland.

The National Councils who form the International Council are organised on the same basis as the International itself, *i.e.* :

- (a) To promote greater unity of thought, sympathy, and purpose, between women workers of all classes, parties, and creeds.
- (b) To further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom, and law.

It must be understood that National Councils are confederations of Societies, not of individual workers. They are usually composed of Societies nationally organised or of national importance, and of Local Councils or Unions themselves composed in their turn of Local Societies.

The National Councils are each officially represented by their President and two delegates, and the Executive is composed of the Presidents of each National Council, together with the elected officers of the International Council. Any individual may join the International Council :

- (a) By becoming a patron, if accepted by the Executive. (Both men and women may become patrons, but it involves the obligation of contributing £20 to the funds once in five years.)
- (b) By special invitation of the Executive to become a "Counsellor," which gives the privilege of attending the meetings of Executive, but without a vote.

Every member of every Society belonging to a federated National Council is a member of the International Council, and can attend and take part in its meetings, but only the three official representatives can vote.

The International Council is expressly forbidden to identify itself with any one or more movements.

Its Constitution does not allow it to be formed in the interests of any one propaganda. This was especially guarded against by its originators, who, although all adherents of the Temperance and Women's Suffrage movements, provided expressly against either the International or the National Councils espousing either those or any other controversial questions.

It can be shown that the International Council of Women has been productive of tangible good. The results of its influence can at present be best traced through the results of the work of the National Councils, which it has been the means of forming. These can show good proof of having been instrumental in breaking down prejudice, and in promoting mutual understanding and charity between adherents of essentially different faiths, races, parties, and of providing a centre round which all who desire to labour for the good of humanity can unite for the common cause.

In addition, they can claim that they have collected and spread correct information about women's work, its needs and its opportunities; that they have prevented the overlapping and multiplication of organisations for kindred causes; that they have given women workers the opportunity of widening their knowledge and of increasing their faith and charity by interchange of views and personal touch with other workers whom they would not otherwise meet; that through their united and representative influence, local and national councils have been able to help local, municipal, and legislative bodies to effect much in the reform and administration of various laws bearing on women and children and on the home.

The International Council hopes in its turn to do the same work on a larger scale, and to provide a common centre around which information about all that concerns women, their work, education, and opportunities in all parts of the world may be gathered and tabulated ready for use; a centre, too, which will prove a rallying point for women who in all countries desire to live for others and leave the world better than they found it—a rallying point where they will learn to know and trust one another, to find strength and guidance and inspiration for united effort for those causes which appeal to all humanity, and at the same time an increased power through larger faith and more enlightened charity for the special mission which must ever have the first claim on the workers of each country and each race.

Further information on this point, and all points connected with the International Council of Women, will be found in the books just being published by the Council.

Speeches at a great Meeting in Support of the Political Enfranchisement of Women.

Held at Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on June 29th, 1899.

THIS was a meeting arranged to welcome the delegates from abroad attending the International Congress of Women, then holding its quinquennial session in London. Mrs. Fawcett, LL.D., presided; amongst those present on the platform were Mrs. Benson; the Countess of Aberdeen; Lady Henry Somerset; Miss Susan B. Anthony (U.S.A.); Mr. Faithfull Begg, M.P.; Hon. Mrs. Arthur Lyttelton; Hon. W. P. Reeves (Agent-General for New Zealand); Mrs. Wynford Philipps; Frau Stritt; Mr. J. T. Firbank, M.P.; Sir William Wedderburn, Bt., M.P.; Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bt., M.P.; Mr. Walter Hazell, M.P.; Mr. W. Johnston, M.P.; Mr. Charles McLaren, M.P.; Mr. John Wilson, M.P. (Govan); Lady Laura Ridding; Dr. Beddoe, F.R.S.; and Mrs. Beddoe; Mrs. Carmichael Stopes; Mrs. Eva McLaren; Lady Helen Munro Ferguson; Miss Emily Davies; Miss Ellaby, M.D.; Hon. Mrs. Bertram Russell; Mr. and Mrs. Russell Cooke; Lady Grove; Miss Honner Morton; Mr. and Mrs. Fisher Unwin; Lady Marjorie Gordon; Mr. Dhadabai Naoroji; Mr. Mark Oldroyd, M.P.; and Mrs. Oldroyd; Lieut. Col. J. W. Lawrie, M.P.; and Mrs. Lawrie; Sir John Leng, M.P.; and Lady Leng; Mr. and Mrs. Haslam (Dublin); Miss Blackburn; Mrs. J. C. Croly (U.S.A.); Miss Bunney (Secretary Women's Liberal Federation); Mrs. Charles Baxter; Miss Palliser; Miss Roper (Secretaries to the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies).

The following Delegates of the International Congress also supported the Chairman on the platform: Mrs. May Wright Sewell (U.S.A.); Baroness Alexandra Gripenberg (Finland); Madame von F. de Mountford (Palestine); Mrs. Willoughby Cummings (Canada); Mrs. Frank Gibbs (Canada); Mlle. Monod (France); Mrs. Gawler (South Australia); Mrs. Armitage (New South Wales); Dr. Cecilia Grierson, M.D. (Argentine Republic); Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Stetson (U.S.A.); Dr. Aletta Jacobs, Mr. C. V. Gerritsen, Miss M. G. Kramers, Mrs. Klerck van Hogendorp, Mrs. Rutgers-Hoitsema (Holland); Miss Ellen Sandelin, M.D. (Sweden); Frau Cauert, Frau Dr. Selenka, Anita Augspurg, Fräulein Pappritz and Fräulein Dr. Schirmacher (Germany); Mdlle. Vidart (Switzerland); Fröken Gina Krog (Norway).

Mrs. FAWCETT said: We are now at a moment of very exceptional interest. Within the last few days in London, there have been events of particular importance as regards the Women's Movement. I refer more especially to the Jubilee of Bedford College and to two great International Congresses which have been held in London, one of which is still in Session and many members of which we very heartily welcome among us to-night. Another interesting event, but one of a less satisfactory kind, is that which took place on Monday last, when the right of women to be elected as Councillors and Aldermen in the new London Bill was contemptuously rejected by the House of Lords. I think we may learn something from all these events. From the Educational Jubilee, we may learn courage and hope; who among those gallant pioneers who worked for the Educational Movement fifty years ago could have foreseen the great triumph of their cause? What prospect did there then seem of opening University Education to women in England and in nearly every country in Europe? To speak of our own country only, out of twelve Universities, nine are entirely open to women, and of the other three, two have opened their educational facilities and highest examinations to women. The fountains of knowledge are no longer sealed to those of both sexes who wish to drink of them. The work of opening the avenues of the higher education to women has been completely done; that should give us hope and should make us go on in the work on which we are engaged with unfaltering courage and determination. If we look for a moment at those two great International Congresses, I think that they, too, have their lesson for us. They show the enormous vitality and the strength of this Women's Movement in which we are engaged. Probably every country in Europe, besides the United States, Australia and our other Colonies, have sent representatives to these Congresses, giving an idea of the world-wide nature of this movement, which has gradually changed the ideals of women and the general conception of woman's place in society. Now, if we look for a moment at the least satisfactory of the three events I have mentioned—I mean the rejection of Clause 2 of the London Government Bill by the House of Lords—I think we may learn something from that also. Unfortunately, the spectacle of the House of Lords pursuing the "Gentle art of making Enemies," is not altogether unknown in English politics. The House of Lords has given us proof of the extent of the disapproval with which they regard the work of women on elected bodies in devoting themselves to alleviating the misery and distress of the lowest and most miserable

portion of the population. But if we look at this question, I think we shall find some consolatory aspects connected with it, to which I shall briefly direct your attention. First of all, I think this action of the House of Lords will have some effect in gaining us converts to the cause of Women's Suffrage. There are many fair-minded friends—men and women—who will say that if such treatment is to be accorded to women who have done good work in the past—that they are to be rejected with contumely from being allowed to continue that good work in the future—that is additional proof that the only safeguard against this kind of thing is the possession of the Parliamentary Franchise. In words, which during the last few weeks have been very frequently found in the press—though not in reference to our question—these events have proved that "the possession of the franchise is of the first importance," and when once it is carried, other grievances will redress themselves automatically without any further struggle. There is another source of consolation also to which I want briefly to refer. I feel, as would be acknowledged too by the majority in the House of Lords themselves—that the moral and intellectual weight of the House of Lords was with those who supported Clause 2. I refer particularly to the noble speech of Lord Salisbury, which in some degree compensates us for the disappointment we feel at the result of the Division. I feel that the speech Lord Salisbury made on our behalf on Monday night will go far in the future to place him in the same category as that in which a former great Prime Minister, Pitt, now stands in the estimation of his successors, from the fact that years and years before those causes were supported by any political party, he stood out before his King and country as the advocate of the abolition of the Slave Trade and of Catholic disabilities. I think Lord Salisbury will occupy a similar rank in the estimation of the future by the fine stand he made for us on this question. There is one more point I should like to urge upon you, especially upon the attention of our foreign friends present to-night, and that is that the point argued in the House of Lords last Monday was not the question of Women's Franchise; the question of women voting in the London local elections was not raised in any way. Even those who must sit in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death as regards this question never had the temerity to raise a voice against the right of women to vote in these local elections. That battle has been won and won thoroughly all over the British Islands. What was done on Monday was the denial of the right of women to sit on Municipal Councils. The right of women to sit on these bodies is a very different matter—or rather, I should say, the right of the London ratepayer to be represented by that person whom he feels is best fitted to serve him.

We often hear a great deal about the thin end of the wedge. This seems to me a most unfortunate simile. We know what a wedge is—it is a foreign body of inanimate matter driven by force into an inert mass—generally also of inanimate matter, with the object of splitting or dividing it. Our movement does not represent anything of that sort. It represents an organic living force with all the strength behind it which vitality and vitality alone can give. We do not seek to drive into Society something foreign to its own nature. We claim to be a part of the Society in which we live, a living outgrowth of its energy; and we find a proof of this in the fact that this outgrowth is to be found in every country of progressive Western civilisation. If we look at Russia, Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, or even Spain and Italy, and last, but not least, at the great English-speaking nations—the United States, the United Kingdom and her Colonies—we see in everyone of them that this Movement is a movement of living growth and vitality. It is this which causes us to feel that it is a power which will continue to grow in the future. I wish it had been possible at this meeting to call on representatives of all these nations to tell us of the progress of this Movement in their own countries. For obvious reasons, that was not possible, and therefore we have made this meeting a congratulatory one—a meeting of welcome to the foreign Delegates who are attending the International Congress. We shall ask a few of them to tell us what means they have found the most effective in carrying out the work in their own countries and bringing it to a successful issue.

Mr. FAITHFULL BEGG, M.P., moved the following resolution:

"That this meeting of Women's Suffragists of Great Britain and Ireland, offers a hearty welcome to delegates from all parts of the world, now attending the International Congress of Women, who have in many instances successfully striven to promote the great movement for the recognition of the citizenship of women by opening to them the political franchise. We thank them for the grand lead they have given us, and we, in our turn, desire to give a good lead to those nations and colonies less advanced than ourselves. We feel that it lies with the United Kingdom and her Colonies, and the United States of America, to carry forward and complete the principle of representing institutions, and to demonstrate to the world that the representation of the people means representation of the whole people, and is manifestly incomplete as long as a whole sex is excluded."

You have many proofs that the influence and intelligence of women have been appreciated in the country. In later years they have been frequently appointed upon

Royal Commissions and Enquiries, and recently, by popular election, they have been returned as Poor Law Guardians and upon School Boards. But this is not all. Have they not justified the confidence that has been placed in them? Have they not proved by their acts that they are competent as citizens to deliberate upon and decide the great questions that come before the country from time to time? Have they not graduated with success and distinction in our Universities? Last of all: I would remind you that this great Empire has been ruled over for over sixty years by a woman (cheers), and surely if the affairs of an Empire like that of Great Britain can be governed by a woman, her sisters ought to be entitled to a vote in connection with the Parliamentary Franchise. I will conclude by asking you to approve the resolution which I have proposed. The movement is progressive.

Mrs. WYNFORD PHILIPPS, in seconding the resolution, said: It is nearly half a century since a famous woman, the wife of John Stuart Mill, published a little pamphlet declaring that women should be politically free, nearly fifty years since the first Women's Suffrage Congress was held in America. Now, on the threshold of the twentieth century, we rejoice to welcome here to-night the veteran leader from America, Miss Susan B. Anthony—(applause)—and the delegates from those generous young countries that have dared to do what we have dreamed of, and have justified in the New World the faith of the most enlightened thinkers in the Old. The International Congress gives a living answer to many pampered old prejudices and favourite old fears about what women will do when they come together for public-spirited purposes. I only wish people would cultivate their hopes half as carefully as they coddle and cuddle their fears! The Congress proves that women can take an interest in home affairs and in national and international affairs at the same time. Most arguments against Women's Suffrage need not be met; they need only be stated, for, like the Kilkenny cats, they devour one another. It is said that woman is too superior—that she is too inferior; that she is too angelic—that she is too earthly; that she is too Conservative and retrograde—that she is too Radical and go-ahead! Mr. Beresford Hope, in opposing the Woman Suffrage Bill in 1870, said the male intellect was logical and judicial, the female was instinctive and emotional, and that the instinctive and emotional had its own duties—to influence, to moderate, to suffer, but not to govern! Mr. Lang, in 1867, on the other hand, said he opposed the Suffrage on the ground that the instincts of all men were against it, and he had much greater confidence in instinct than in logic. From which we observe that instinct in man is a reason why he should govern, even to the extent of keeping women out of governing power, whilst in woman, it is a reason why she must not be permitted to govern, though she may very properly be permitted to suffer. In the House of Lords only this week there has been set the harsh barrier of serried prejudices against the logical, natural, wise and righteous demands of women that they should have some share of government in this great city. It is said the vote would cause woman to leave her special sphere, the home—but does it cause man to leave his special sphere, his profession, workshop, business? What it would do is to bring into the home wider interests, deeper sympathies, and teach woman the needs of those less happily havened than herself in this great empire on which the sun never sets, but in the shadow of which are many shipwrecked lives and many desolated homes. Woman is said to be "the angel of the hearth," then let her not sit so long with drooped and folded wings; let her spread the strong pinions of her extended sympathies and bear upward into better conditions the heavy burden of human want and human woe. It is said, too, that if women had a vote that men and women would disagree, and there would be serious domestic and social discord; but remember that men have never yet been found to agree on any single point whatsoever, and women have never yet been found to agree on any single point of any kind. Is it likely that at this late day they will at last learn to agree, only in order that they may disagree with one another? My earnest appeal to you women delegates from so many lands is to let no petty, personal, ephemeral consideration stand between you and the demand for this great reform. I beg you to persist in it, remembering that it is the only sure foundation of all you care for: the power to do right more efficiently, to obtain right more rapidly, to retain right more certainly, and without it, the structure of women's new and noble liberties is necessarily insecure and incomplete. The vote is sometimes spoken of as if it were a little thing, but it is not a little thing. Wrapped up in the heart and soul of the English-speaking people is the firm conviction that the vote is a great thing, the sign of worth and dignity—the possession of which puts a hall-mark of excellence upon a man. Five million women have had to enter the labour market, and there, suffering under many a disadvantage, woman is tried in the fire of life, and has she not proved herself of sterling metal? If that be so, then stamp *her* with the hall-mark! Rightly understood and rightly used, the political voice is the conscience of the nation, that still, small, but most potent voice, that may inspire the body politic with the living spirit of the people. Therefore claim the vote for women, that the

structure of government may be breathed into by the animating spirit of the womanhood of the nation.

The Hon. Mrs. ARTHUR LYTTTELTON, speaking in support of the resolution, said: I stand before you here very apologetically instead of Dr. Cockburn, the great champion of women in South Australia. I can in no way fill his place, for he could have told you of the success of Women's Suffrage in that country, and one ounce of proof is worth a great deal of prophesied success. I have been asked why we devote so much time and energy to this propaganda instead of devoting ourselves to the more obvious good causes that lie before us. My answer is that not only does Women's Suffrage lie at the back of all these philanthropic movements and that none of them will succeed without it; but that there are in the lives of States as in the lives of individuals, psychological moments, times when certain things ought to be done; and if they are not done, then the State or individual suffer for it. To my mind we are fast reaching one of these moments in the present condition of women in our country. Owing to the advance of civilisation, we have attained a very different position from that which we held fifty years ago. The increased safety of our streets, the use of steam, the general progress of civilisation, even the bicycle, has helped to change the position of women enormously in the last fifty years. Their freedom is now an established fact; but freedom without responsibility is a very dangerous thing, and this is fast becoming the condition of women in many parts of the world. I don't know if you have ever come across a certain poem of Keats called "Woman":

"Oh, who can e'er forget so fair a being?
Who can forget her half retiring sweets?
God! she is like a milk-white lamb that bleats
For man's protection."

When I heard that many of the Peers who voted against the Clause allowing women to serve on the new Councils, did so because the women they knew urged them to vote against it, I felt that those women wished to be considered as "milk-white lambs bleating for man's protection." The great difficulty in our way is that there is no one at this moment whose direct interest it is to press forward Women's Suffrage. Everyone—I speak more especially of the governing bodies of the male sex—is more afraid of what women will do than hopeful of what they will gain from the women's vote. Thus, if this great movement is to succeed, it must be through enthusiasm only, and it is therefore incumbent upon all who believe in it to work with their whole heart and soul and strength. We have, as I cannot but think, a very great amount of strong opposition yet to face, and it will be very hard work to overcome it. The adjustment of the relations of the sexes, like those of the classes, will take a long time to accomplish. When once Women's Suffrage is obtained we shall hear much less of the perhaps well-founded charge that we think too much of women's questions, and that we exalt ourselves at the expense of men. We do so because persons who are oppressed are always self-asserting, and the way to prevent this self-assertion is to put them on a level with men. We ought to be inspired by the presence here of friends from all parts of the world to work with more vigour and more enthusiasm. The century is waning to its close, but I hope the childhood of the next century will see Women's Suffrage an accomplished fact, and that with it there will come a higher, stronger and nobler view of the relations between men and women.

The resolution was then put and carried by acclamation.

Miss SUSAN B. ANTHONY (U.S.A.), who was received with prolonged applause, the audience all rising, in responding to the resolution said: Mrs. President, Officers and Members of the Suffrage Societies of Great Britain and Ireland and of all the world over, I wish I might be worthy of the honour which Mrs. Philipps gave me of being one of those who, more than fifty years ago, assembled in the little town of Seneca Falls, New York, and made the declaration that the right to vote is the under-lying right, the one which protects all other rights. But I was not there. Lucretia Mott was there, and Martha C. Wright, whose daughter sits beside me, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton—all signers of the call for that first Convention. I hear all these women and the men also, asking, "Why is it that when this first proclamation for the ballot was made in the United States more than half a century ago, other countries are getting ahead of us?" Well, I can assure you there are many reasons. It is not from any lack of hard work and persistent effort on the part of the handful of women who have stood at the front of this movement in our country; but the complications are very unlike those in your own country. Suppose that here in England, after all your labours and after your magnificent champions—from John Stuart Mill and Jacob Bright down to Mr. Begg—had worked in your Parliament for years, had urged the enactment of a law, and succeeded in getting it through the House of Lords, that the question then had to be voted on by every elector in the mines, the factories and the rural districts of every county of England, how much would you expect to get all at once? And that is the difficulty with us.

Our revolutionary Fathers proclaimed equal political rights. At first they made practical application to a very few men only, and during the more than a hundred years' battle in our country, those great principles have been gradually extended to one class after another. In the beginning only Church members voted, then only rich men, then only white men, then only men; that is, we had an aristocracy of the Church, then an aristocracy of men of wealth, then an aristocracy of white men, and at last we now have an aristocracy of *men*. We now are simply demanding to-day the application of our fundamental principle of political equality to the other half of our citizens. We are asking for nothing new, but simply for the practical application of the old doctrine that was declared by Hancock and Adams and all the old revolutionists, who rebelled against King George because he insisted on taxing them without giving them the right of representation. We are insisting to-day that the men of the United States shall no longer continue to violate their principles—to tax women and deny them representation. We have what you might call forty-five Englands; that is, we have forty-five States, and each State Legislature must first pass a resolution submitting the question to be voted upon by the men of that State. We have succeeded in gaining the Franchise in four States of the Union by this slow process.

Another hindrance I want to mention to you: every single year, over a quarter of a million of foreign born men are landed on our shores, fresh from the monarchies of the Old World, who know nothing at all of the Declaration of Independence, of the principles of free and equal government, and we have, as General Grant once said, a "big job on our hands," we have to educate a quarter of a million of men every year into the principles of our American Institutions. And I want to say to you, my good friends, that in everyone of the fifteen States in the Union in which the question has been voted upon, if only the native born men had had the franchise, the women in everyone of them would have had the ballot to-day. I am not sorry that those men who do not understand our Institutions have the right to vote, for they never would understand them if they had not that right. So we must wait with patience this slow process of education. And we have been very patient; in our half century of agitation and education we have gained Women's Suffrage in four States! And besides that, women have Municipal Suffrage in one State, a vote on matters of taxation in several others, and School Suffrage, to a greater or less extent, in twenty-three States. In over one-half of the States of our Union, women are voting to-day. In Louisiana, one of the old Slave States, on the sixth day of this month, women taxpayers in the city of New Orleans, for the first time in history cast their ballots on the question of taxing the people of that city for the purpose of building sewers and improving sanitary conditions. The men were so considerate of the women when they made that constitutional provision, that they arranged for them to vote by proxy if they were too modest to go to the ballot box. When some of the women attempted to get a proxy they learned that, by the law of Louisiana, a married woman's name on a certificate would not stand, and therefore they were compelled to go to the ballot box.

The distance we have gone in the last fifty years is beyond computation. Before I sit down I will tell one little incident illustrating the condition of things when we started. I had been a teacher in the State of New York for fifteen years—from the age of fifteen to thirty. A State Teachers' Convention was held in my city of Rochester. Over a thousand women had gathered in that Convention and perhaps two hundred men. Up to that time no woman's voice had ever been heard in one of these Conventions; only men had reported the result of their experience, because it was considered improper for a woman to speak in public. Those men appointed a committee to prepare resolutions, and one of these declared that teachers were not respected as were ministers, lawyers and doctors. In discussing that resolution one man declared that the profession of teacher was higher than that of a doctor, of more use to the community; another, that it was higher than that of the lawyer; and a third even affirmed that it was of more service to the world to train the young than it was to try to reform them after they had been brought up in a crooked way. "And yet," said these men, "Ministers, lawyers and doctors are treated with the greatest respect, invited into the best families, often elected to high offices, whereas schoolmasters are treated slightly, and are often called Miss Nancies and old grandmothers!" I listened with a great deal of interest, and at length—having been born and reared a Quaker, and always taught that God inspired a woman to speech just as well as a man—I rose in my seat and said, "Mr. President!" The President was a Professor of Mathematics at West Point, a pompous man, wearing a blue coat, brass buttons and buff vest. He stepped to the front of the platform and, inserting his thumbs in his armholes, said, "What will the lady have?" The idea never entered that man's cranium that a woman could rise in her seat and address the chair just like a man! And I said, "Mr. President and gentlemen, I would like to say a word on the question under discussion." "Then," said Professor Davies,

"What is the pleasure of the Convention?" And he looked down to this little handful of men on the front seats, never casting a furtive glance to the thousand women crowding that hall. One man moved that the lady should be heard, and another seconded, and they discussed the question for half an hour! At last, by a very small majority, it was decided that the lady should be heard, and I managed to say: "Mr. President and gentlemen, I have listened to your discussion with a great deal of interest, but it seems to me that none of you quite comprehend the cause of the disrespect of which you complain. Do you not see that so long as Society says a woman hasn't brains enough to be either a minister, a lawyer, or a doctor, but has ample brains to be a teacher, that every man of you who teaches school practically acknowledges that he hasn't any more brains than a woman?" and sat down. As I passed out of that hall at the close of the Session I heard many a woman whispering to another, "Who is that creature?" "Where did she come from?" "I was never so ashamed in my life, I wished the floor had opened and swallowed me up!" They were honest, they really believed it was degrading to a woman to speak. The next morning Professor Davies, in calling the Convention to order, assumed his pompous position and said: "I have been asked why it is that women are not put upon the committees, why they are not invited to prepare reports, and so on." And then he continued: "Look at this magnificent hall, at the beauty of the entablature, the symmetry of the shaft, and the strength of the pedestal. Could I be instrumental in dragging from its proud elevation that beautiful entablature and rolling it in the dirt and dust that surround the pedestal? No, Heaven forbid!" And he was quite sincere, and really believed that if a woman stood in an audience and spoke she would be degraded to the level of a man. Exactly so now, men are afraid that if women vote, if they hold office, if they sit in Congressional and Parliamentary halls, they will degrade themselves to the level of men!

THE HON. W. P. REEVES said: You want me to tell you about the common-place, work-a-day present. There is some satisfaction in dealing with an actual fact, and I have come here to speak about the work of Women's Suffrage in two British Colonies. Is England proud of her Colonies? When it comes to telling foreign nations of the grandeur and growth of the British Empire I hear Englishmen say that our Colonies are very fine things indeed—vigorous, robust, progressive and even great; but when it comes to taking a hint or two on domestic reform from those colonies, of profiting by example—then, one hears that they are small, young, a long way off, and peopled by an inexperienced race. Well, they are some distance away, and they are young countries. But it does not follow that everyone in a young country rejoices in the first bloom of youth. The British Colonies are peopled by men and women who are uncommonly like the people of the mother country; they are of the same race, profess the same religion, read the same books—to some extent even the same newspapers—wear the same dress, are governed in many respects by the same laws, even share the same prejudices and obey some of the same social conventions: and they are uncommonly proud of it. True, the white people of New Zealand number but three-quarters of a million, and the people of South Australia about half that number. Yet I cannot help thinking that as they are distinguished by industry, sobriety, obedience to the law and a general wholesome condition physically and morally, that it may not be beneath the dignity even of the people of this great metropolis, to study their experience and institutions. Female Suffrage has been the law in New Zealand for between five and six years. Now when a child is five-and-a-half years old no doubt it is rather soon to predict what sort of a man or woman that child will become, but I think you may predict, if it is robust and well-grown, that it has a good chance of living a healthy, good and strong life. Female Suffrage is a very healthy youngster indeed; it has come to stay in New Zealand and South Australia, and so well and comfortably does it work in both Colonies that the only complaint raised against it is it has not produced the revolutionary results its opponents predicted. They expected a tornado; they only met a gentle breeze; and they have the bad grace to complain of it. I do not mean to say that it necessarily follows that when Female Suffrage becomes law in this country—as I hope and believe it will before very long—that exactly the same complaint will be made after five years; but exactly the same sort of evil predictions as I have heard here, were launched at the head of the movement at the Antipodes before it became law. We heard exactly the same tales about neglected children, abandoned husbands, vile cooking, untidy houses and a general falling off of feminine grace, sweetness and charm. None of these evil effects have come about; social life in New Zealand is very much the same as it was before, and if at election time a man finds that the lady next to whom he sits at dinner is able to talk in a practical way about the political questions of the day—that certainly does not make dinner time duller or less interesting. What has been most striking and noteworthy of all has been the cool rational good sense with which woman has applied

herself in our part of the world to discharging her duties as a citizen. This she does very much as rational men do, and on many subjects takes the same sort of view. A previous speaker remarked that one objection advanced in this country against Women's Suffrage is that women's intellect is instinctive and emotional. I daresay that in her relations with man, woman displays an amount of sympathy and self-sacrifice that makes her seem—to man—a very instinctive, emotional and irrational creature; no doubt she treats him a great deal better than he deserves. But it has occurred to me sometimes, whether man in his relations with woman—especially younger men in their relations with younger women—may not sometimes seem to a woman to be a little instinctive and emotional also? I can well imagine that the younger of my sex do not always seem to be the most severely logical of human creatures in their relations with the younger of the opposite sex. But it is an actual fact that in the Australian Colonies woman has taken her part as a citizen on common sense and business lines. After five years of the Suffrage I can truthfully say that New Zealand is more prosperous now than she has been at any time during the last twenty years. You may take my word for it that the five-and-a-half years of Women's Suffrage in New Zealand has only strengthened the conviction with which the majority of that colony passed the law which initiated it. And as it came suddenly, almost as an agreeable surprise, to those who had hoped for it over a long series of years, so I venture to believe that it will come suddenly and unexpectedly some day in England.

FRAU MARIE STRITT (Germany) then spoke, but as her speech has been given in full in the last issue of SHAFTS it is not reproduced here.

LADY HENRY SOMERSET said: We have only to trace the history of all enlightened government to see the evolution by which it has come slowly from a past of tyranny and a reign of force, and has little by little expanded under the light of religion and civilization, and each reform as it came forward, has been combatted by the inherent selfishness of those who desired to maintain existing conditions against justice and right. First, the freedom of all classes had to be established; then the freedom to obtain the necessaries of life; then the freedom of expression of thought and opinion; then the freedom of religious conviction—inch by inch this liberty has been fought for, by those who have been in every succeeding generation the pioneers of wider thought. In every struggle the social fabric of the past has been against the progressive movement of the future.

It is, therefore, no wonder that a reform that strikes a vital blow at the whole social fabric of every nation is slow in coming—so slow, that to some it seems an almost hopeless delay; but although every year brings to some of us the thought that we are individually, perhaps less likely ourselves, to see the righting of this wrong and the triumph of justice, I am not sorry that time intervenes; for time means much to woman at this present crisis; time means education, a juster understanding of the real principles that underlie the demand, a truer conviction of the necessity of reform.

There is one point that proves conclusively the fact that where responsibility is given to woman she has not failed. Consider the Queens that have been great in history, women who rank amongst the greatest monarchs the world has known. They were not picked women, not women chosen because they were intellectually supremely greater than most of their sex, but women to whom the accident of birth brought the responsibility; such examples as Queen Elizabeth, Queen Anne, Maria Theresa, Catharine II., Margaret of Austria or Queen Victoria?

Again we are told that the responsibilities and cares of woman bind her so completely that it is impossible that her mind should be at liberty to consider and weigh the different questions which should affect her views in political life. How about the responsibilities of men in professional life? The doctor who has a hundred lives hanging in the balance, and whose thought is day and night engaged in their physical cure; the head of a college on whom rests the care of hundreds of young men; the general who has to plan his campaign; the merchant whose mind is absorbed with schemes of speculation.

My feeling strongly is that it is absolutely impossible for men to understand the intricacies of a woman's position as woman herself understands it.

Why is it that women inspectors have been an infinite boon to the factory? Why is it that women Guardians have been a blessing to the workhouse, that their presence on Vestries has been of value?

But then men turn to what they believe form the interest of the largest proportion of women. They say "Look at the fashion papers, look at the literature that woman reads, and tell me that the average woman is fitted to be a voter." I do not wish to compare the frivolities of women with the frivolities of men (sometimes we would wish that the follies of men could be called by a name as innocent as that), but I merely wish to emphasise the fact that responsibility is the greatest instrument for education. We have all seen it again and again. We have seen an empty-minded

person hold out hands to accept some serious responsibility and from that hour become changed. The frivolity is gone, the responsibility has moulded the character, and the very questions that seemed to be uninteresting and unimportant have become vital.

And if this is so, by what right is woman to be denied the education of responsibility? I have not noticed that men think it necessary to relieve women of the burden of labour. They are very willing that woman should take her place in sharing the world's toil.

The charge of the children is considered to be woman's peculiar domain, and those who oppose our movement lay more emphasis on this than on any other aspect of the question. "What can a woman want more," they say, "than to fulfil her mission in educating and caring for children?" But I maintain here again that woman's interest in this her special domain has not been protected. A woman's child is only her own so long as that child is born under shameful conditions (and then the child, so wrongly called illegitimate—for there is no illegitimacy save in the relations of the father and the mother—belongs to the woman); but if for any reason it is impossible that the woman should remain with the father when he is her husband, if his drunkenness or brutality makes it obvious that he is unfitted for parental duty, the child, until she can prove her case, belongs according to the State solely to the father. I do not think that anyone can be complacent with the conditions that we have arrived at even during the reign of the progressive ideas of this last century, or seriously satisfied with the vice and misery that surrounds thousands of our population, with the swarming multitudes of children growing up in densest ignorance, with the worn and weary men and women whose life is sweated in underground cellars, with the hopeless starving multitude who are many of them driven by their conditions into lives of vice and sin, with the harrowing, heart-breaking social problems that meet us at every turn. These rise up before us to tell us that the government of the past has not been an unmitigated success: and that it may be that when the intellect of woman is brought to bear upon some of these questions, the best interests of the masses will be involved in their political emancipation.

Another objection that is constantly advanced is that the political differences that might exist between married people would render the exercise of her political responsibility dangerous to domestic happiness. But I would urge, Is there not at the present moment often conscientious difference of opinion between married people on highest points of duty? Women have independent religious opinions; they may change their religion after marriage, and there is no question upon which more bitterness can arise than differences of religious views.

It has been well-said that "our sense of justice will dictate that the being who is to suffer under laws shall first personally assent to them," that the being whose industry Government is to burden, should have a voice in fixing the character and the amount of that burden. Around the soldier's camp there has always been the greatest amount of evil and temptation, and the best hope that has come to the last years of this dying century is the message of peace that seems to us a herald of a better day. Nothing will do more to break down the power of war than the influence of woman, who necessarily must be opposed to all that endangers the lives of those she loves.

Plutarch represented advanced thought among the Greeks; but as to the rights of a wife, he said, "A wife shall have no friends but those of her husband, and as the gods are the first of friends, she should have no gods but those her husband adored." And it was an old Stoic who laid down the proposition that woman "in every kind of affairs and obligations, whether in behalf of men or women, is prohibited from having any concern."

There comes to me a deeper sense of responsibility as I realise that I stand here to-day in the place of one who did the widest and greatest work for woman's welfare in this generation, I do not even except the veteran whom we honour here to-night, Susan B. Anthony, for Francis Willard brought to the heart and conscience of woman as none other has, her deep responsibility to the world around her, and the intimate relations between the home and that larger home circle which we call Government. Her voice is silent here to-day, for she has been called to wider spheres of work. And there comes to me also the responsibility of knowing that the messages I can give to such gatherings as these will grow fewer. I realise how the solemn vicissitudes of woman's life have helped to confirm her faith in the beautiful realities of the Unseen. I do not dread the future.

Parliamentary Enfranchisement of Women in Norway.

By GINA KROG,
(Editor of "Nylande," Kristiania).

OUR Norwegian Constitution dates from the year 1814. It was given at Eidsvald on the 17th of May. Representatives from towns and counties met there. These men were inspired with liberal and patriotic ideas. They placed the chief power in the hands of the people gave to the King only a suspended veto, and founded a Parliament without a House of Lords. As to suffrage, the conditions were limited to property and position. Later in the same year it was resolved to unite with Sweden under the same King, on the basis of equal position, both countries keeping their own different institutions.

In all these years the country has prospered as to education and material and intellectual power. Still, there is much wanting in the people's education. With us, as in other countries, the heart has not kept pace with the head. Also with us, we hear many disharmonies, even if they are not so jarring as in the great countries. We are still at a loss how to battle with human wretchedness, and the most elementary questions are still unsolved.

The principal reason is, in my opinion, that our legislators and rulers have forgotten half the population, have forgotten the women, have ignored the mothers, sisters, wives, daughters; have not forgotten to charge them with duties and with taxes, but have forgotten to do them justice, have forgotten to treat them as their equals and to give them civil rights.

The Norwegian men have not forgotten their own existence, least of all with regard to political rights. They have extended the Parliamentary Suffrage more and more, so that to-day all men who do not belong to the two classes—criminals and lunatics, have the right to vote.

I am sorry to be obliged to state that to-day the Norwegian women have not the right of voting except in the case of certain regulations as to the sale of liquor in each community. They have not even so much as municipal suffrage. Still we have a faint hope of getting it ere long. No less than seven different Bills relating to it have been brought before the House lately. From the Parliament these have been sent to the Government, and if the Government will take this matter in hand the Reform Bill will probably be passed. For the passing of this law is required only a majority, while for the Parliamentary Suffrage two-thirds' majority is required, as it involves an amendment in the Constitution.

It is the question of this large majority which will make the parliamentary vote so difficult for us to obtain. Before the 76 members out of the 114 composing our Parliament will vote for us many prejudices must be overcome.

I mentioned that our rulers had forgotten woman's existence. I don't mean to say that their brains are not clear now and then on this point. And if it were my task here to speak about the Norwegian women's position generally, I should have a long list of bright instances to point out, from the year 1854, when the Right of Inheritance was made the same for men and women, till the year 1892, when our only University was opened to women as students with the same privileges as men—and thus improvements have continued.

But it is Parliamentary Enfranchisement that is my subject, and

with regard to this it is true that we have been quite ignored, and political rights are just what Norwegian women want. In our country I believe all questions and interests are brought before the Parliament in a greater degree than in any other country, and the greatest consideration is given to the electors.

Politics cause a division in women's and men's interests which is not desirable. On one side, political views take the men's interests too much from the home culture, while in a still greater degree our women show a lack of interest in regard to political life. Our public schools with compulsory education give the same advantages to girls and boys, and one sees the girls fully standing on equal terms with the boys, but later on the women fall back in intellectual development, in my opinion, the principal reason being that they are hindered in taking part and consequently lose interest in public life.

Seeing that women were so entirely ignored as to Parliamentary Franchise, some women resolved at last to remind their brothers of their existence. In 1885, we formed a Society for Women's Suffrage, its purpose being to obtain the Municipal and Parliamentary Franchise for women on the same terms as it is extended to men. One of our Members of Parliament took upon himself to bring up a Bill. Bills of constitutional importance have to be brought up and be referred in one of the three-yearly Parliamentary Periods, so as to be discussed in the next Period. For this reason the Bill was not debated till the year 1890, in June. The conditions for men's Suffrage still depended on property and taxes. If the Bill had been passed then, it would have given only a few women the right of voting; as married women, who have not property in their own right, are not taxed.

There was a warm dispute in our Parliament on that first occasion. It was the "great deluge" coming, said one of the Bishops of our Church, present. It was seen, however, that our cause had also gifted supporters in the Parliament. When it came to division, 44 out of the 114 members voted for the amendment. The next time the Bill was debated in our Parliament, in June, 1893, 58 Members voted in favour of it, and the third time, in May, 1895, it obtained 54 votes.

As will be seen, matters looked best in 1893. There was then a majority for the Bill, but not the two-thirds' majority required. That the Bill failed to obtain as many votes in 1895 was because of the Liberal Party being returned in less number. It is a peculiarity in our country that no Conservative Members have voted for this amendment in our Constitution.

Meanwhile the Norwegian women have tried to express their claims by the aid of petitions, meetings, etc., still not in so great a number and with such energy as could be wished. As things were, we could not complain much of our Parliament's relation to our cause up to this time, and we were grateful to the Liberal Party for its support of the Bill. The theoretical objections against the cause were also lessened, at all events it was considered want of taste to use such expressions in debating as formerly. We had great hope to see ere long some women in possession of the vote.

But the political situation changed, and now the prospects for a near issue have darkened deeply.

As before mentioned, Norway and Sweden were united under one King, on the basis of equal position, keeping the liberty and rights that the Constitution had given. Nevertheless, the union of the two kingdoms led to difficult crises in our political life. It has cost our country

much toil and labour to keep its independent position on a level with its development. In the case of foreign representation especially, vexations and controversies have arisen which have caused a strong party strife within our country, and this has also influenced the women's cause. The Liberal Party, which has been the most eager to maintain the country's national independence, has, at the same time, had as its aim Universal Suffrage (man's Suffrage). The fervent struggle for our national cause has forwarded the extension of Suffrage to men, and has distanced the claims of women. Even the Liberals, hitherto our only supporters, have now commenced to ignore us. In 1897, the Liberals were returned with so large a majority that they were able of themselves to make amendments in our Constitution. This power they made use of to grant common Parliamentary Suffrage to men, whilst only 33 representatives were willing to remove the political disabilities of women.

The Bill cannot again be brought before the House till the next Parliamentary Session—1900-1903. And there is little hope of having it passed in that period. If, in the meantime, women get the municipal vote, I am afraid our legislators will let our apprenticeship last long before they trust us with more. And now, when each man has the right of voting, women begin to feel uneasy because none of their own sex is present to defend their interests. Only think if a hostile reaction should come, it might sweep away what we have already gained. Bills are, however, secured and will be debated in the next period, several Bills, indeed, founded on different principles.

The changed political relations have also influenced the women suffragists and have caused a split among them. Impatient at not obtaining even the least result, the existing Suffrage Society resolved to try new tactics and demand Suffrage, if not on the same terms as for men, then for some privileged groups of women. The consequences of this were that a new Suffrage Society was founded on the old tactics—a nationally organised Society that maintains the old claims of Suffrage for women on the same terms as it is given to men—and which will not work for anything less than this—Justice and Equal Position—these claims being, in the opinion of the Society, the only permissible weapons when fighting against injustice and subjection.

I am also inclined to think that the Parliamentary Vote will not at first be given to a few women in particular. We will have it, all of us, as soon as we have struggled long enough to obtain it. A very good thing it is, however, that these divergent opinions have brought life and development and impetus to the work. Whilst greater indifference than formerly has been traced among politicians as to Women's Suffrage, there are signs of awakening life among women themselves over the whole country; and this will at last abolish that indifference—we hope—if only women will keep together, hold fast together, though they march under different flags, unite for our great cause, so that no petty triflings may be permitted to spoil anything.

It appears as if our struggle will be a long one; therefore we must be the better armed—and this applies not only to Suffrage work, but to whatever we work for and aim at, and it does not apply to women in one country only, but to all.

While we are labouring on, we must seek to obtain fresh blessings. The more our best qualities are strengthened and developed the greater the victory will be, when at last we gain it—both for our home, our country and for humanity.

The Musaeus School and Orphanage, Colombo, Ceylon.

THIS is an institution, the name of which will be familiar to many, and still more so the name of its Principal, Mrs. M. M. Higgins. As it is a work of great importance, and has for its object the uplifting of the Sinhalese women, and thus the whole race, I am sure many of SHAFTS' readers who are watching the wondrous movement in favour of woman amongst all nations will be interested in the work of the School both in its past, present and future prospects.

The past has been one of great, and sometimes almost overwhelming struggle; had it not been for the indomitable faith and courage of Mrs. Higgins and her staunch co-worker, Mr. P. de Abrew, the work would have collapsed altogether. The present shows the effects of unflinching, strenuous effort, and the future seems to hold still greater possibilities.

It is nearly eight years since Mrs. Higgins came to Ceylon; having had her intense sympathy roused by an earnest appeal from Mr. de Abrew, through *The Path* and *Lucifer*, she chose to be a helper, and had her choice confirmed by Mme. Blavatsky, who advised her to make it her life's work—she has been ever since the leader of all those fortunate enough to come within her influence. The first few years were full of the anxiety and trouble ever attendant upon any pioneer work, especially one meaning the enlightenment of a people. All know how such innovations are generally viewed by the very persons for whom the work is done—how much more coldly therefore would this endeavour be looked upon by this race, hitherto so rigidly bound by caste and custom, and accustomed to regard suspiciously any attempts to turn them from their own Religion—the tenderest point in any land. They had been deceived several times by those who at first professed to be tolerant and educate the children, while leaving their religious views untouched. But one missionary explained how they managed, when he said, "We do not interfere with the religion by speaking against it, nor do we teach it to them, that would be against our *principles* and conscience, but" he added, "we teach the Bible of course." He was by-the-way himself a converted Sinhalese. By this explanation one can see how the parents are blinded; they are assured that the children will not be forced to change their religion, then the missionaries do not find it against their principles to undermine the child's religious ideas, understanding well the receptivity of the child's brain, and that it will be difficult to eradicate ideas firmly impressed upon the plastic period of youth. There must of course be all due praise given to the Christian missionary work of education in the Island—but perhaps I may be allowed to write something of this at another time. To return to the School, which I do not hold up as infallible, but as one having for its aim purification rather than conversion.

Almost six years ago Mrs. Higgins and her girls, numbering eighteen, were living in what they called "the mud house." With this number the house had to be fairly large; its walls were of mud and wattle, its roof of interlaced cocoa-nut palm leaves, called then "Kajan." The interior divisions were made of a strong cloth, "jute-hassian," the floor being bare earth. This was splendid in dry weather, but in the monsoonal time it was mud indeed! The funds in these days were very low, the very barest necessities only could be afforded, and often there was "not a cent in the house," but before the stress grew too great, help came from some quarter. In spite of all trials,

all wants, the work never flagged, the young souls expanded under the strength of the Love that shone upon them from a heart wholly devoted to their welfare. Helpers came and went, none permanent; none took upon their shoulders the task of leading more rapidly to the front this promising race; none cared to carry the burden of its Karma in the same whole-souled way as had done the two unflinching co-workers. The mud house, whose existence was due to the generosity of Dr. W. A. English, stood the ravages of the periodically stormy weather, but the white ants found out ere long that it suited their taste splendidly, and set to work in such earnest that they soon made walls and posts but frail shells. However, some time before its final collapse came, by dint of careful saving, and some donations, a new triangular building was commenced, of more substantial "Kabouk" and brick. None too soon was this completed. The mud house, though some of its walls had to be propped up, was still being used as a kitchen, when one day its walls began to totter, and the utensils were hurriedly removed but a few minutes before it crashed to the ground.

From this time forward the work made steady strides, though seriously hampered by the unceasing need of money. About this time Mr. Wilton Hack, being brought accidentally to the School, became interested in the undertaking, and, touched by the struggle against odds, vowed that should it ever be in his power he would do all he could for it. Soon after, circumstances so placed him that he was able to carry out his purpose, and the main building, substantial and two-storied, was erected. The numbers increased so rapidly that the people were beginning at last to have confidence in our brave leader, Mrs. Higgins—seeing that she meant what she said—that there was no ulterior motive of personal benefit in her work. It was soon felt that more room was needed, as classes were being held in every available corner, verandahs and all. It was then decided to work up the School in order to obtain a Government Grant, but for this it was found necessary to have, according to rule, a Teaching Hall. On an appeal being made, a Sinhalese, father of one of the pupils, responded, and others followed his lead, while European friends gave what help they could, thus materially aiding in the building of the Hall, with a large dormitory above, capable of accommodating some seventy girls. With difficulty this was finished sufficiently for the examination to be held in it. Some forty-two girls were presented, of whom almost all passed. This was in February last, 1899, and now again more space is urgently needed, because the roll shows about eighty on its list compared with forty this time last year.

This alone will testify to the value of the Institution. Enlargements will have to be made somewhere, and there is no doubt that the funds will be forthcoming at the right time, as has always been the case, just as though it were directed knowingly, perhaps by the "invisible helpers" who stirred into activity some germs of latent generosity in philanthropically inclined hearts.

When this is satisfactorily arranged and the foundation of the prospective "Industrial School" firmly laid, then Mrs. Higgins and Mr. de Abrew will be enabled to turn their attention to an extension of labour in founding day schools in crowded centres. Buddhistic schools in their midst are greatly needed, the only thing delaying their commencement being want of money and workers, as they would not be self-supporting for several years, and they cannot be carried on without expenditure, be they ever so economically devised, and many of the

children would have to be taken free of charge, as many are now, in this School.

The great aim that Mrs. Higgins is always striving to realise is to train those under her care into women with a broad and tolerant view of life, freed from the crushing bonds of custom which oftentimes forbid the young women of some castes from doing anything whatever except eating and sleeping. It is almost marvellous the amount of time they are content to spend in utter idleness, chewing the eternal betel. Just think what it means, this endeavour to redeem a whole nation from the mental inertia that generally settles upon and saps the intellectuality of a conquered race, because all good or clever qualities are repressed by the conquerors. The youths being more free and privileged have emerged earlier from this obscurity, and have proved themselves capable of competing successfully with their Western rivals, as is shown in the results of University examinations, or, in fact, in any department where judgment is impartial, which it is not always, as it would never do to give posts of importance to natives, however proficient—so says policy. The women have been kept much more in ignorance, how, then, can ignorant mothers teach their children? For the first fourteen to sixteen years life is idled away till they are married, and become, like their parents, almost automatons. So strong has been the emphasis laid upon the necessity of marriage that the family consider it a disgrace, a stigma, if all the girls do not marry. They are often promised when tiny children, though this is not so much practised as in India, and mostly towards the interior. This is one of the errors that Mrs. Higgins is trying to correct, though it may be several generations before any definite effects are noticeable; still the seeds are being planted which are sure to germinate into a strong, healthy plant, bearing good, sound fruit. One thing has been gained; the girls sometimes remain till they are sixteen or eighteen, which is indeed a promising sign. Mrs. Higgins tries to keep every girl as long as possible, till they are of an age fit to understand what marriage means, and what the duties of a mother should be; to instil into them the fact that marriage is not the only desirable state in life, that should they not marry life holds opportunities, duties, whose fulfilment will confer a lasting benefit upon their fellow creatures. This a few are beginning to comprehend, especially those that have been in the school for some time. The unswerving devotion of their beloved teacher to their cause has had its due effect upon those long in contact with her, and who have become considerably imbued with the idea that they too would like to help. Two or three have desired to try to fill the place of much-needed Sinhalese lady doctors, well qualified and of strong character, who would impress some important hygienic facts and simple natural laws upon these people.

It matters not so greatly that perhaps ambition also largely incites them to take up this course, so long as they do what duties come in their way nobly and well. They are but young, and have yet to learn fully unselfish service to humanity. Some have become and others are preparing to become teachers in the school. One and all are taught housekeeping, a training very much required amongst them. Each has certain household duties to perform, appointed at the beginning of the month. This branch is specially attended to, in the hope that the girls will initiate some of its practices in their own homes, which are generally sadly neglected—owing to the almost ineradicable carelessness that is the national fault. Ineradicable because there is never the necessity

put upon them of furnishing themselves with all things, or starve if they do not work.

Nature has showered upon this favoured isle her choicest and best with lavish hand. Its inhabitants, if they possess a few cocoa-nut trees, can live quite comfortably on the returns got from them. Their wants are few, and the need of clothes almost non-existent—in the country of course; in the towns should anyone be very poor or starving they will be generously fed by their relatives, and they never refuse a beggar, being, I know from personal experience, a wonderfully hospitable race. They have all the plants needed for their curries growing round their homes, or near by in the jungle; these require no planting, no caring for; Nature does all that, they have only to pluck them. So also with their medicines and fruits. Some of the herbs and fruits have properties only *partially* understood so far by the natives themselves, and wholly undreamt of in western pharmacy. But their use is becoming a forgotten art in the encroachment of European methods of curing. To regenerate this art is a work that lies waiting for some of those bright intellects now developing. We use some of them in the school, such as Sarsparilla (Irimusu) and Lunuvilla, two valuable medicines in cases where the dreadful sores break out that are common to all the people, and for purifying the blood.

Sewing is another speciality. The children, like all other easterns, are very clever and patient sewers and lace makers. They quickly learn to make their own clothes. Dressmaking is to be taught as a trade when the Industrial School is opened, and cooking also, which they like very much. Perhaps the daily routine will not be uninteresting. At a quarter to 6 the bell goes for the older girls to get up and bathe; at 6 the younger girls do likewise, and at 6.15 the little ones. Household duties are done till 7, when the early meal is taken, consisting of some kind of rice cake and food. Study begins at quarter to 8, lasting till 8.15, when the rest of the house duties are done, in getting the tables ready for breakfast at 11.30, in order that it will not interfere with school work, the only servants being three cook-women and a gardener. At 8.40 the school opens with a song, followed by "Pansil," which is repeating five of the commandments (Buddhist), etc., in Pâli. At 11.30 breakfast is taken; it consists of rice and curries, a diet wholesome and very nutritious. School re-opens for the afternoon at 12.30, closing again at 3.30, followed by tiffin. The girls are then free till dinner-time at 6; at 6.30 the evening studies commence; the small girls stop at 7.30 and go to bed, the older girls at 8, and the remainder have the option of staying till 9, then they too retire and all is quiet. The regularity of the life cures many who come in somewhat delicate health, caused mainly by idleness, and because they have a custom of taking their dinner any time between 8 p.m. and midnight, then going to sleep directly afterwards. They grow strong and bright, and one might say younger, under the influence of kindly leading and the doing of work they like. The simplicity of life I would strongly recommend to Western schools, and, were it carried out, would lead to splendid results in forming the characters of the girls.

Their religion of Buddhism is one well calculated to rouse all that is best in those who can grasp the spirit of it (a task not difficult for minds with its doctrines hereditary), and realise that almost all the ceremonies in connection with it are merely outward forms, which, if taken literally, will degrade the homage due to the memory of the Great Buddha by falling into idol worship. This is somewhat difficult for

the children at first to understand, as they have been so used to perform these acts after the manner of their ancestors for long years, without knowing the reason of them, nor inquiring for it, as they are not an inquiring nor an observant people. It needs a great effort, which must be constantly practised, in the minds of the girls to adhere to these new teachings, they are not apt at breaking away from useless and now meaningless ceremonies. They all begin to understand some of the fundamentals of their religion as they should be understood, after being in the school for a time. It is pleasant to sit among them and mark how they become absorbed in what is being said to them, how they drink in the words with such eagerness that it is inspiration for the one speaking to them. A good many things are explained by Theosophy's light because they find it easiest to grasp, and as they are all somewhat psychic to impress thoughts upon them is not difficult. That they do understand, is seen in the flash of intelligence in their beautiful brown eyes. Only those that understand English well enough can have the benefit of these teachings, as none of the teachers know yet enough of Sinhalese, nor do the Sinhalese teachers know anything of Theosophy, but we hope to do it by-and-bye, when we have gained sufficient knowledge of the language, one eminently suited for religious discourse, because it is so rich in meaning. It is quite certain that those who do not turn of their own free will from their religion as not satisfying enough in its aspect of Truth, should not be urged; forced conversion seldom or never leads to good results, they are far happier in their own ideas. Mrs. Higgins could see this, and understood that to train them according to their own religion would conduce to the best results. She makes strenuous efforts to purify their thoughts on these all-important subjects, and explains the real meaning of the ceremonies they so perfunctorily perform. Many do not even understand thoroughly the meaning of the prayer they recite. They do it because it is the custom. Of course, I speak mostly of the lower and middle classes in this last case; the upper and more widely-educated have been taught to despise their "heathen" religion, having become proud and hypocritical in their desperate effort to ape the English, whom they at once bow to, yet dislike, and often despise at heart. Let me add again this is not a sweeping assertion, there being many glad exceptions. It is really appalling to see the absurdities some of these customary ceremonies bind the people to. When analysed they are found to rest upon a beautiful truth, which has become almost hidden under the weight of modern externalities. To break from these bonds means, perhaps, to be an outcast from one's caste, then what courage a woman needs to do it. So afraid are they of this, that it prevents the teachings having much effect, yet that it does impress is encouragingly proved, by some of the ideas expressed by the girls, and by the parents to whom they have told these things, and who have been talked to by Mrs. Higgins, are far above what they had entertained some years ago.

Even these few outlines will show how great this undertaking is, how tremendous its influence will be. It will also be seen how necessary it is for Mrs. Higgins to have assistants willing also to forego everything for this work, and to be trained under her. This necessity has been partially filled by three assistants, one Dutch and two Australians (sisters), who have been fired by the example of their Principal, and have come in the same spirit to devote their services to the work. They work for love (not a difficulty with these children), not for wages. The present small circle are united with Mrs. Higgins by strong bonds of

love and understanding. There is wide scope for at least half-a-dozen more.

The paid assistants are two Sinhalese gentlemen, one for the Cambridge mathematics, one for the Sinhalese, assisted by two Gurunanses (as the women teachers are called) and two of the girls who have been trained in the school, who are, of course, not paid, as they are supplied with everything. An American lady is expected soon, and another Gurunanse, and still there will be more than enough work for all.

There is so much of interest in connection with this subject, that to tell it would take many pages. I must thank the dear Editor for her kindness in allowing me to explain at such length about a work, that in spite of its proved purity of aim has been much misunderstood. Before closing I will ask all SHAFTS' readers to send their good wishes to us, thus giving strength to all. It certainly deserves wider and more generous acknowledgment than it has hitherto received. What matters it that the religious auspices under which it is carried on differ from what many approve of, that does not detract from its noble purpose. It is a truly Theosophic work, and possibly in no other land is there a work with a higher aim and carried out more faithfully for the fulfilment of that aim.

J. M. DAVIES, F.T.S.

Here and There.

By MAUDE.

THE holidays are over. Well, where have we been, what have we seen, and what to us is the net result of it all? Excuse the personal pronoun and let me, for one, describe a few places with the resultant thoughts they have brought in a somewhat discursive holiday between two episodes of a busy year. The summer was remarkably fine, and the holiday was to be exceptionally long. What better than for the escaped bird to wing its way to some place it had not alighted at before, to take a bird's-eye view of some country of paramount interest and then return to its own isle and rest among more familiar spots, some chosen place consecrated by home-bred genius. And this we did exactly. Germany was the first and Scotland was the second, and the palm goes to the latter. Of course—although one trains one's mind year after year to be unprejudiced, one cannot in a few short weeks understand a new country well enough to enjoy it as one enjoys the old lands, whose writers have been a delight from childhood.

But there is, nevertheless, something of great value in the first look one gives at a new country, possibly it yields the truest impression of all we gain. Much like reading a new face at first meeting, the after meetings often only confirm first thoughts.

Yes, we were on the Rhine, among the vineyards of song and story, the mediæval towers, the beautiful little wine-producing villages, the mountains with their legends and myths and old-world history. We saw the well-to-do Germans at the baths drinking the waters, as people do at Leamington and Harrogate, and noted their fine physique—both men and women—the men certainly finer than our own (women to-day are fine everywhere), and we put a question down on memory's tablet, hoping for an answer by-and-bye: Is this breadth of chest and corresponding height, in any way due to conscription? Or is it because by law young boys are forbidden to smoke?

We went to fine old Frankfort, with its ancient houses, dormer-windowed, breathing many an old tale, and into its *Ghetto*, where in the bad old times they locked the Jews in nightly, and unlocked them in the morning; and we saw the old house in which the Rothschilds had begun their career, and which they still use for a business place—a very concrete reminder that "stone walls do not a prison make," even when the wall gate is locked nightly, and that genius of whatever kind will and must break through any barrier; and then, close by, in the Korner Square we looked well at the statue of Justice, with her veiled eyes and holding as evenly the same scales as she held there in those days of Jewish persecution, when no Jew was allowed to enter this market square! In our hand at that moment was a daily paper full, brimful, of the case of the Jew Dreyfus, and our friends in the party were making scathing remarks upon France, decadent France they said; but some of us saw something more in that paper, it was a column headed "The Transvaal," and we felt somewhat uneasy lest the disgust we are feeling towards our next neighbours may, in degree, also be felt towards us by the Boers. And another question went down in memory's tablet: Will the giftie e'er be gi'en us to see ourselves as others see us?

At Goethe's house we revelled in the antique—the room in which the great man was born, the old furniture, and very charming, indeed some fine, old prints of Rome brought from that city by his father before

the illustrious son was born; and out of the window we looked at the house towards which the boy Goethe so often looked, and of course we easily filled the answering window with the fair face of the girlish Gretchen. Turning round, on the wall within we saw a portrait of the last lady who kindled the admiration of the old philosopher. Another question was very obtrusive here: What concrete good has Goethe done for his country?

Next day we visited a village school, so near the Rhine that the children could use its banks for a playground if they chose. The master was an old man, white bearded, but his discipline was admirable; there was that nice touch in the children of respect, but not presumption, as he led them through a song with the help of a violin. We looked round, neatness and plainness prevailed, no sign of the many German educational appliances of which we hear so much at home—but then it was only a village school; on the bare walls of each room was a picture of the Crucifixion, and facing it another of the first German emperor. Another question here: Did these mean "Fear God and honour the king," or were the children to draw some other inference?

It was only 10.30 a.m. as we were musing thus, but the children began to march out, and we were told morning school, which began at 7.30, was now over. Away trudged the little Germans, each carrying quite a big load of text-books and a strongly-framed slate; they were to foregather again about three in the afternoon. We were told that these little people, who in a few years are to run commercial races with our little people, came to school so willingly that compulsion, though a legal form, has not to be enforced. Thanks to the parents for this, and they, in turn, can thank the educational system, which was in force before either they or their parents were born. English children are equally willing to attend school, but their parents block the way. General education with us is in its infancy still.

But we have our special virtues also, and perhaps the very vice which prevents our people being coerced into a new thing, whether good or bad, has its opposing virtue in the very great freedom we enjoy. We may be led but not driven. In Germany, one feels (or at least one thinks so) the sense of imperialism in the very air. Take, for example, the State-managed railways, how inelastic they are—no meeting of circumstances as they arise by officials in whom certain discretion is allowed. Let us explain. You make a mistake about a certain train you and your party are to travel by, and thereby unconsciously incur an extra charge; but the *technique* of all this is not clear to English ears, coming from angry German tongues, and you expostulate at what may be after all a railway error, meanwhile the whole party are *locked in the railway gates* till the sum is disbursed. Here again a question crops up, would this, could this, take place at home? if so, should we not call it illegal detention? Does not an address card generally answer all mistakes on our railways? And then that inelasticity with respect to excursion parties—so many, so much reduction, but let there be one over that number, and he or she must pay full fare. No, we don't like State-managed railways since trying them, and we don't like the soldier-like manners of their servants. It was quite refreshing at Queensborough to hear an English guard say to a gentleman who was stretching his legs before the train started, "Going on, sir?" in a tone of polite enquiry instead of command.

Well, there may be another way of looking at all this, and we acknowledge candidly the wisdom of not judging finally upon short experience.

And now let us tell of two things that will always stand out strongest in the recollections of this pleasant holiday; they are both connected with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the event which made the Germany of to-day, and which doubtless accounts for a good deal of what strikes us so strongly in a visit. You cannot fail—say at Coblenz, standing there where the French Moselle meets and unites with the German Rhine—to be struck with the difference between a country which is defended all round by the ocean, like ours, and one that throughout its history has had to fight for its existence with near neighbours, who have little to do, if well prepared, but to walk over. No wonder cohesion is all-important within its borders, and little wonder that a good deal of power is lodged in the hereditary leader if he but consolidates the idea of unity.

But these last remarks by the way—we were about to tell of two incidents that struck home forcibly. The first was this, sitting one evening dining in a verandah not twenty yards from the water of the Rhine, with its constant procession of boats of various kinds, our attention was drawn to one laden with more than a thousand soldiers, of whom nine hundred had fought in the war of 1870.

Of course knives and forks were dropped at once, for man cannot live by bread alone? and we stood to salute the brave fellows who in their youth had risked life and limb in their country's service, leaving in the fields of the dead many who were at that date as young and as strong as themselves.

And where had these veterans been? At the expense of their country they had been taken to Rüdeshheim to see that beautiful great national monument which stands out opposite Bengen, showing its face well to all the country side. This monument, as many of my readers know, was erected after the war as a memorial of it. What a beautiful thing it is to be sure. At its top stands out Germania as Victory, forty feet in height. Below are figures of Mosella and Rhinius with all they mean, and on a panel below, facing the spectator, are a group of equestrians—the council of war to which all the princes of all the States are called—the emperor stands in their midst, all are portraits. On the left side the artist Schilling has a most beautiful panel illustrating the departure for the war. In modern dress, but classically modified, stands the son whose parents are sending him off with saddened faces, he may never come home again: there is the wife who is taking a last embrace of her husband while their children cling to him as if to hold him back. But look on the opposite side of the monument and see what is there. The war is over, the battle has meant victory, and the returning heroes are being met by matrons and young girls with crowns of olive to place on their brow. The whole conception is beautiful, and beautifully rendered.

But what a tragedy might have happened on this spot! In 1884, when the monument was unveiled by the emperor, and all the surviving princes were present, and when Bismarck was planting that tree just behind, which bears his name, the whole company might have been sent, without a moment's notice, into eternity, for a dreadful plot had been prepared. The whole hill was tunnelled with recesses for dynamite, and the fête day was to see the consummation of a ghastly plan. But a second Guy Fawkes turned informer, and the death-deed was averted and its projectors safely imprisoned where they could work no more harm.

We left this monument feeling that it very specially represents German patriotism, as much as "The Watch by the Rhine"—whose words

are cut deep into the metal—it is the embodiment of a very powerful sentiment, and one likely for long ages to animate the new-made, united nation.

But our time for the Rhine, and all it means, was over, and we were to seek in a colder climate a bracing rest to precede future work in London.

We cannot trespass further on the editor's space by telling of it here, but if this has not proved wearisome I should like much to describe in the next issue of SHAFTS what delightful hours were spent in that part of bonnie Scotland for ever sacred to the genius of Robert Burns.

Choice Bits from Choice Pens.

I caught myself thinking this preposterous thing. Suppose it were all over? Suppose we never saw each other again? Suppose my wife were to die? To-night? Suppose some accident befell her? If she tripped upstairs? If the child's crib took fire, and she put it out, and herself received one of those deadly shocks from burns not in themselves mortal? . . . This, I said aloud, is the kind of thing *she* does when I am delayed. This is what it means to wait. Men don't do it often enough to know what it is. I wonder if we have any scale of measurement for what women suffer. What she, for instance, by that time was suffering, oh, who in the wide world else could guess or dream? There were such suffering cells in that exquisite nature? Who but me could understand?

* * * *

My language to my wife that unhappy evening returned to my consciousness with incredible vividness and minuteness.

It occurred to me that I might as well have struck her.

In this kind of moral pommelling which sensitive women feel—as they do—how could I have indulged? I, who knew what a sensitive woman is, what fearful and wonderful nervous systems these delicate creatures have to manage; I, with what I was pleased to call my special training, I, like any brutal hind, had be-rated my wife; . . . I had belaboured her with the bludgeons that bruise the life out of women's souls. I wondered, indeed, if I should have been a less amiable fellow if I had worn cow-hide boots and kicked her.—ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS in "*The Gates Between.*"

Reviews.

Keyboard Music, Price 6d. (A. D. Tyssen, Chancery Lane.)

"A GREAT and feasible Reform theoretically and practically considered," the writer says of the subject matter of this pamphlet. The writer is Miss E. L. Young, author of *The Happy Reader*, *The Keyboard Nursery Book*, and other essays connected with her favourite study—Music. Miss Young is an enthusiast as all reformers must be, to be able to sustain the rush of opposition which comes ever from the army of *What Is* against the force of *What Is Coming*. Part first, *Musical Difficulties*, is excellent reading, being full of that sense of large life and fuller comprehension which pulses in the brain and heart of every true reformer. She says:—

"We all know the saying, 'Art is long and life is short,' but do many of us know how to find comfort and not discouragement in these words? To feel that the opportunities of artistic enjoyment are boundless, that the hunger and thirst after art shares with the still nobler hunger and thirst after righteousness, the same assured blessing of desire fulfilled—this should be the most comforting and exhilarating of thoughts."

She points out with convincing argument the difficulties, endless and tedious, of the present system of musical notation, explains the keyboard system as so much more simple and easy, shows us how to acquire the keyboard system, how to learn keyboard music, the transition from the keyboard to the old notation, directs us to the Keyboard Circulating Library, Keyboard Teachers, Keyboard Publications, and gives us a bright, encouraging glimpse of her picture of *the Music of the Future*. I strongly recommend the book to the studious attention of parents, teachers, and students.

Books will be reviewed in next issue which I am quite unable to find time or room for in this. I strongly recommend to the reading of thinkers *The Awakening of Women*, by Frances Swiney. It is well worth reading, not to be approved absolutely, but because it opens out a vein of thought hitherto but scantily worked, and likely to bring much light to bear on old beliefs. It is published by George Redway, London. Also *The Pathway of the Gods*, by Mona Caird (Skiffington & Sons, 163, Piccadilly). It is worth very careful and studious perusal. Quite a new idea in the ethics of love is here evolved, and one calculated to purify all human love.

"Woman the Individual" is a paper printed in pamphlet form of an address delivered before the Fowler Institute and the Woman's Progressive Union. It is full of bright ideas, piquant, original, and made strong with serious thought. It will make an excellent little pocket referee for speakers on this subject. Published by the Ideal Publishing Union, 33, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. Price 1d. The proceeds of the sale of this pamphlet will be sent by Miss Esther Higgs, the writer, "to further the cause of progress."

Thoughts from the Lecture on "The Modern Revelation of Truth—Present Immortality."

Delivered before the Woman's Progressive International Union, by

MR. and MRS. A. H. CURROR.

TO-DAY is indeed a day of reform. Because the ideal of life is much higher than its actualities, the earnest men and women are at work in the many avenues and activities of life, trying to improve the conditions. But these devoted workers have a difficult task and are oft discouraged, for they are toiling the long, slow way, endeavouring to reach humanity from without through the environments, position, habits or customs. But are the outward conditions the real shackles that bind us? In truth, these are but the necessary effects of a deeper cause which can only be found in ourselves. Then, that reform is highest which points its shaft direct to the primal cause, that is, straight into the heart of the individual.

Here is the centre from which widens out the many circles of the outward life. As a pebble thrown into a quiet pool is the cause of the wonderful rings of wave-motion, which broaden and broaden until they break on the bank in waves of purity and peace, so the state of the inner soul or consciousness sets in motion the nature of the conditions and environments of the outward life. Therefore, the highest reform is that which strives to make character not laws, to create pure, true desires in the heart, and to unfold freedom of individuality by awakening us to a true understanding of our being, and teaching us how to live the Highest Life. Thus, as individuals become new creatures they radiate new life in daily living, and of necessity begin a new order of things which shall broaden more and more. A new world will be thus evolved, for all true progress centres in the individual.

The re-forming of the personality is therefore of the greatest importance, for this work must of necessity include all other.

Everyone is capable of improvement. It is the natural impulse of life to unfold higher and higher. This is the secret of evolution, the lever that has lifted the world from the lowest form of living structure, through long, long, æons of time, up to now, human at the head of life on this plane.

Can we go higher? We all feel that our way of living is not the highest. There are certain states or conditions of life that each one is endeavouring in some way to get rid of, such as disease, poverty, moral weakness, ay, even the tendency to death. One feels from within that these conditions do not belong to life, that they are not true of life. This is now clearly revealed to earnest souls. It is seen that sickness, sin and the liability to death are *conditions* of life—not realities—conditions which are transient, unreal, through which we are passing in our process of evolution from ignorance to Light. Nothing but the knowledge and the living out of Truth will free us from these conditions effectually. The study of disease will not conquer disease, so that its menacing presence may be removed from life, neither will the study of evil free us from degrading habits.

Bring in the Light and darkness will flee. Find the true Law of Living and true conditions will appear in life. Correct the wrong by doing the right and we will have health for sickness, strength for weakness, confidence for fear, happiness and peace for doubt and despair.

True growth is from within. It is Nature's lesson. The unfolding bud will of necessity force the outer conditions to change, to fall off, for they are no longer needed. That mystery of life which is in the seed, that fullness of promise which lies hid in every living primal cell, is in us also. What the seed-leaves are to the undeveloped bud rolled up within them, so is the mortal or animal life to the Infinite One within it. What is that Infinite One? It is that "still small voice" within, which we cannot hear when engrossed with mortality; it is that inspiration that strengthens us to accomplish some seemingly insurmountable difficulty though we know not how it is done; it is the spring of that self-devoting, death-conquering faith which Jesus taught; but, above all, it is the mystery of Life, the Infinite Possibility that waits in every human being for its evolving—the Immortal.

In the full light of to-day, it is not Faith alone which tells us of one immortal nature. Ardent, living Faith, single-handed, has sustained us through long, dark and tempestuous struggles, but now Faith no longer works alone, she has been joined by Science, which gives a new strength. Many childish images or ideas, which she in her darkness formed to explain her fervent hopes, Science now has cleared away, and has adjusted her conception of life to the actual, the real.

While Faith is the fire, the inspiring, sustaining power, Science is the light, the elucidation of life and its natural environment. The union of these two is the union of the ideal and the real.

Science does not destroy our hope of Immortality, but rather confirms it and brings its possibility nearer. The light of modern thought, which is born of Science, has enabled us to look into the wonderful, mysterious Life of Earth, to see it vested with the power of Immortality, It is bringing us nearer to a consciousness of our own marvellous being, founded of atoms indestructible and immutable, one with the infinite organism of the universe.

Thus Science, the light without, sees us externally to be formed of everlasting substance, and Faith, the fire within, feels that we are eternal beings not born to die.

Not in another sphere, but here on the earth, not in another life, but here in this one, must the final consummation of earth's long evolution of Life be reached.

Has Nature worked so long and so arduously to evolve her wondrous creations, her unspeakable beauty of form, her incomparable wisdom of plan, as seen in bird, tree, and fruit, only to see her dearest and highest, the human, turn away to dream of far-away, visionary states for immortality? It is not escape from this life that is the way of Truth, it is victory over ignorance, and the triumph of the Truth of Life.

Correspondence.

MUSIC AT THE WOMEN'S CONGRESS.

To the Editress of SHAFTS.

MADAM,—As I see the forthcoming number of SHAFTS is to contain a further report of the Women's Congress, I venture to ask you to insert in the same number this protest from a musician. I hear with surprise that at nearly every social gathering held in connection with the Congress an Hungarian Band was engaged to provide the musical program. Private hostesses are by courtesy outside the pale of criticism, but surely the ladies who made arrangements for the first great reception of the delegates might in all fairness have engaged an orchestra of English women rather than one composed of foreign men. The occasion was unique. The best and noblest of our English women were acting as hostesses to the chosen representatives of other countries, and I think it would have been an act of courtesy and tact to have invited some of our own women musicians to share in the entertainment and to have given them opportunity to prove to our foreign guests that English women as a whole are in advance musically of the women of any other nation. I think, too, some of these foreign ladies would have been interested and pleased in the amusement provided for them, and to many it would have been an absolute novelty. Of course ladies' professional bands vary from the very good to the very bad, but a trustworthy agent can always provide whatever is wanted, and a large and good ladies' band could have been easily procured for this most auspicious occasion. Certainly to give the chance to foreign gentlemen, however skilful they may be, was a clumsy error and most outrageously unfair to our sex.

Faithfully yours,
FLORENCE G. FIDLER, L.R.A.M.

Newbury, August, 1899.

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An address given to a meeting of Medical Women, April 27th, 1897, by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell. For private circulation. To be obtained from the National Vigilance Association, 267, Strand, London, W.C.

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