

# The Woman Worker

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## WINTER JESSAMINE.

By Jessie Farmer.

I am in a narrow street, so dingy, so mean, so disheartening, with its double row of ugly, respectable houses shut in behind shabby railings, and a strip of dull sky framed by the line of roofs. A grey mist soddens everything; Christmas bells sound through the heavy air, muffled and sad.

From glimpses that have come to me through open doors, from voices, from lagging footsteps, I know plainly enough that the lives in those mean houses are grey and saddened, too.

So many dreary lives in this one mean street! And I know that there are other such streets in hopeless monotony, one beyond another, an outlook to put to silence even the herald angels of joy!

There are stunted lives, and bitter lives, and lives driven to the bad by the utter dreariness of it all; there are workers too tired to enjoy Christmas, because they have been hurried and driven for days, ministering to the luxury of others; and women are there who wish they could only give the children a merry Christmas for once—yes, just for once in a way, poor things, as it used to be when they were young.

But of the children themselves I dare not think much upon this festival which began with a child. For I see Childhood starved in imagination, starved in reverence, in all that makes for happy and gracious being (not by bread alone are these our children fed)—well-nigh "clemmed" for want of the higher vision of life.

Thinking upon the misery stowed away behind the dingy walls, one forgets that sunshine ever breaks out here, that the sky can ever be free from grey, clinging mist.

No clear sky, no sunshine, no hope anywhere!

With the despair of it heavy in my heart, I look down across the iron railings of the nearest house.

Is it just an illusion out of tears, or do I see living boughs against the dreary door, and through the mist, a star? . . .

Not one, but a whole constellation, a golden trail of stars, on sprays of winter jessamine—a joy in the poor street, a miracle almost, a warrant of sunshine that has been and of summer that is to come.

And I am standing, all perplexity, wondering why the boughs should bloom thus at Christmas while human lives are so bare—wondering, without faith—when

the door opens with a streak of light, and two women stand on the threshold.

I see their pinched, worn faces, the shabby dress, the signs that cry of poverty; I hear a voice through the mist, and the words so tender and so compassionate:

"Take it, take it, my dear! You want it ever so much worse than I do."

I lose the rest, all but the one voice protesting, the other urging, comforting.

Yet, that is enough! Enough to show the living growth of sympathy and self-denial beside the dreary door, and through the mist a star!

Yes, a miracle almost, like the jessamine—a warrant of the human sunshine that has been and of the brightness that is to come.

So I am standing at last, all amazement, marvelling how such love can flower this Christmas, where human lives are so bare—marvelling, but with faith.

And with faith in the heart of mankind I dare to think of the lives in these ugly, respectable streets—all the stunted lives, and bitter lives, and lives driven to the bad, the workers hurried and tired, and the mothers that would like to keep Christmas, but cannot.

Even of the children themselves I dare to think with faith and hope upon this festival which began with a child.

Because love glows beside the dreary door, through gathering mist, a Star.

## AN EXMOOR TRAGEDY.

They have gone out hunting the wild red deer,

The tall red deer with the soft brown eye;

And the yelp of hounds and the lusty cheer

Ring out as the clattering hoofs go by:  
Down the quaint old street, thro' the coppice near,

Away o'er the purple hilltops high,  
They have gone out hunting the wild red deer,

The tall red deer with the soft brown eye.

They come home slowly at set of sun,  
And carry the deer with the soft brown eye:

His last wild race o'er the moor is run,  
And ugly stains on the curved throat lie:

No more the towering antlers rear  
In stately majesty towards the sky:  
They have come from hunting the wild red deer,

The tall red deer with the soft brown eye.  
ROSE E. SHARLAND.

## Babies and Other Things.

By Rose Noble.

Not a hundred miles away from this office lives a woman who gets a living by office cleaning. Also, when work was slack she took over the responsibility of cleaning out the little iron chapel where she attends, though the pay was exceedingly small. This work was a pleasure, and she therefore put up with her husband's grumbling about the pay. One day, when the woman had done her work at the chapel, she returned home to find that the toddler of the family—the last arrival but one—had fallen into the fire and sustained such severe injuries that it died next day.

Everybody at the inquest seemed to note particularly the fact that the woman was cleaning a church; a jurymen remarking that here was an inversion of the legend in which an angel rocks a cradle while the mother is out on an errand of mercy. He wanted his hearers to deduce from this affair that as Providence let the baby be burned while the mother was cleaning a church, it does not do to trust in Providence.

"The Holy Mother took the darlint while you tended God's house," said a co-religionist, painfully aware in her secret heart that this was a helpless platitude she was airing.

"It's a judgment, more like!" said the husband, remembering the small pay attached to that particular morning's job.

"Was the baby wearing flannelette?" asked a jurymen, intent on airing his pet idea.

The mother said nothing much. She bought a fire-guard with the money she had intended for Paddy's new boots, and she reflected that if she had been cleaning an office for pay, instead of a chapel for something beside pay, there would not have been such a fuss. Then she dismissed all the comments on the "accidental" death from her mind, and went on to clean out an office.

The whole talk bewildered her; each speech seeming like a bit of a separate picture puzzle, all the "causes" being misfits to the one disastrous effect, her child's death. She relieved her mind by extra scrubbing, and hoped the baby was safe, and that Sally had not put the guard against the wall while she cooked the dinner and then forgot to put it back again.

With just such bewilderment must some mother's view the talk about "flannelette deaths." (What were they called before flannel was invented? And why was flannelette invented, when it never claims to be as good as flannel?)

Flannelette ought to be abolished? With all my heart. Who that can have flannel for nightgowns and wincey for socks wants flannelette? Whoever heard of a "flannelette death" in Park Lane? And why should "ettes" be invented for the use of working people—the producers of flannel?

But you can put your hand this minute on a lot of folk who would be glad, ridiculously glad, if butter-ette and milk-ette ("This milk is warranted machine-skimmed") and cheese-ette (margarine

cheese), to say nothing of some bread as an excuse for the use of these further luxuries?

Gold-ette and silk-ette and a few other unnecessary "ettes" cannot be taken seriously these times. It is food and flannel we want. And as for flannelette, have you observed how Cotton, like a hard-working wife of a working man, looks upon flannelette?

"Just put it through the washing-day I get every Monday, scrub, boil, and rinse: cold mutton, crying baby, and back-ache. It'd be limp; cotton'll boil!" She says this with emphasis and some contempt.

Flannel is disdainful. "My merits are obvious. Flannel is flannel, and the world knows it; there is no need for advertisement."

"Do you want to lie on the shelf till you are moth-eaten?" snaps the salesman.

"No," says Flannel, with dignity. "But I'm not going to be cheapened to the level of flannelette."

"Get to causes," says the Woman Worker, stepping into the shop. "Who spoke of Ruskin just now? Six thousand years of weaving, and have we learned to weave? . . . What have we done? . . . Are we yet clothed? . . . Does not every winter's snow robe what you have not robbed, and shroud what you have not shrouded, and every winter's wind bear up to heaven its wasted souls, to witness against you hereafter by the voice of their Christ—"I was naked, and ye clothed me not?"

"That isn't exactly what we were talking about," says the shopman. "We were speaking of trade and cheap substitutions and—"

"Look here," says the Woman Worker. "There is no such thing as a 'cheap' substitute. It is dear every time—ask mothers and Socialists and people with the good of the people at heart. Besides, no woman buys flannelette when she can afford to buy flannel, or puts her baby out to nurse with a bottle as luggage when she can stay at home and feed it herself. And the cause of the death is the cause of the flannelette. Flannelette and deaths are two rank growths from one bad root."

There's a little baby lying in the corner of someone else's grave, and the only memorial is in the mother's heart. What is one among so many?

Ask the mother. I do not think she will answer you with her thoughts. Even if she saw the use of it she has not time: she is scrubbing.

It is royal to do good and to be abused.—MARCUS AURELIUS.

It is a sad reflection that many men hardly have any religion at all; and most men have none of their own; for that which is the religion of their education and not of their judgment is the religion of another, and not theirs.—WILLIAM PENN.

## A YEAR'S DREAMS.

Since the Christmas bells last rung  
We have woven many a dream  
Time the tyrant harsh has flung  
Headlong in his hurrying stream.  
Never care, O, never care!  
We will weave them yet more true,  
Brighter, sweeter, yet more rare—  
Laughing, singing—I and you.

Since the carollers sang clear:  
Resolutions fine and pure  
As the snow-men we did rear  
Long ago, could not endure.  
What's the good of weeping, then?  
As the sunshine melts the snow,  
Resolutions, like white men,  
Come to nothing: sing, "Heigho!"

Yet keep building, dreaming on—  
Better that than sleep—despair:  
And perchance, when we are gone,  
Some slight fragment sweet and fair  
Of our dreams and buildings long  
May a little time remain:  
Better laughter, striving, song,  
Than the sluggard's popped gain.

They who never weave a dream,  
Never know the colours dear;  
Always walking by Life's stream  
With bent heads from year to year  
(As the patient horses do  
Pulling boats whilst others ride);  
Never see the sky of blue,  
Nor the grasses by the side.

These are they who make our chains  
Keep their strength. Oh, let us dream  
Of a world where Beauty reigns,  
And a nobler, wider stream—  
Till from all that men have built,  
Produce of their smiles and tears,  
All the blood that they have spilt  
Men unborn make happier years.  
ETHEL CARNIE.

## AN ARABIAN BOWER.

Wide galleries ran all around the four sides, whose Moorish arches, slender pillars, and arabesque ornaments carried the mind back, as in a dream, to the reign of Oriental romance in Spain. In the middle of the court, a fountain threw high its silvery water, falling in a never-ceasing spray into a marble basin, fringed with a deep border of fragrant violets. Two large orange-trees, now fragrant with blossoms, threw a delicious shade; arabesque sculpture, containing the choicest flowering plants of the tropics; huge pomegranate-trees, with their glossy leaves and flame-coloured flowers, dark-leaved Arabian jessamines, with their silvery stars, geraniums, luxuriant roses bending beneath their heavy abundance of flowers, golden jessamines, lemon-scented verbenum, all united their bloom and fragrance, while here and there a mystic old aloe, with its strange, massive leaves, sat looking like some hoary old enchanter, sitting in weird grandeur among the more perishable bloom and fragrance around it.—MRS STOWE.

I impute no blame to myself for being where I am, at the expense of millions. Only sometimes I wish there was a temple handy into which I might drop in spare half-hours to breathe a word of thanks to the undistinguishable dead.—WHITEING.

## "R. B."

### The Sketch of a Personality.

By A. Neil Lyons.



AUTHORITATIVE PREAMBLE.

Members of the "Clarion" Staff always think and speak of him as "R. B." The readers of the paper and persons who capture him at railway stations usually call him "Bob." I suppose that some psychological significance attaches to this fact; but I shall content myself with placing the fact on record, leaving to my readers themselves the task of supplying philosophic comment. I owe it, however, to my colleagues to anticipate and repudiate the obvious suggestion that we are awed by the Presence. It is not like that. We know R. B. himself—the man behind the man who writes the books—and I suppose that, like our readers, we are snobs, and feel that a familiarity practised by the multitude is too gross for us.

This is a genial sort of beginning—I don't think. But the fact is that I am not merely strange in my manner, but strange in my mood: for this is a great adventure which lies before me. I have to do a very difficult thing: to write honestly about an intimate friend. I will trouble you for your sympathy.

#### Misgivings.

You will have guessed instinctively that I undertake this task with many misgivings. Of course. I should not, in any case, have omitted to place on record such a gentlemanly sentiment. But I may fairly claim that the position in which I find myself is one of exceptional delicacy. It is not merely that I am almost the youngest of Mr. Blatchford's colleagues and the newest of his friends, but that I am also faced by this disconcerting thought—more than half the people who will read this production have known Mr. Blatchford and worshipped him, either in a vicarious or a personal sense, for nearly as many years as I have lived.

These people will naturally view, if not with hostile feelings, at least with very critical ones, this effort, as it were, of a newly-joined midshipman to explain his captain to old messmates. I glow and tremble with alternate fits of pride and rage in contemplation of the task which has been set me. And I beg, parenthetically, to explain that I have only undertaken this job at all because everybody else has shirked it. A monograph concerning Mr. Blatchford had obviously to be written, pending the full-dress biography which some hand will some day certainly write. We had much argument about it, and we ultimately decided that the only "Clarion" writer possessing the superb courage essential to the performance of this feat was—myself. This is my simple explanation.

It is clear, of course, that the man best qualified to write about "R. B." was "R. B.'s" oldest colleague and confidant—Mr. A. M. Thompson. But Mr. Thompson asserted that his great friendship for Mr. Blatchford was in itself a bar to the undertaking. "I could as easily," he said, "write an honest book about my wife." It suits me very well to seize upon this argument. The converse of Mr. Thompson's plea shall be my plea: I know Mr. Blatchford so comparatively little that I may, perhaps, succeed in writing honestly about him.

But it is an ill business all the same. My mind is surging with confused ideas about the apologies which I ought to offer, the explanations which I ought to make. There is the title, for instance. Many suggestions have been offered, considered, and discarded, including "Brave Old Bob," submitted on an unstamped postcard by an inspired follower. But, taking one consideration with another, I prefer to leave it at "R. B." That, as I say, is what we call him.

#### The Biographer's Attitude.

Then there is the really important question of my own attitude towards Mr. Blatchford. I feel bound to make a plain statement in this connection, so that those readers who, on the one hand, are looking for gush, and those, on the other hand, who expect impertinences, may be induced to refrain from reading these pages, supposing such an action to be possible. Mr. Thompson, in a hastily-written announcement respecting this sketch, stated that I "view the opinions and temperament of Mr. Blatchford very critically." This is at once an overstatement and an under-statement of my position. To say that I view certain of Mr. Blatchford's opinions very critically is grossly to understate the passionate scorn with which I view his complacent belief in human goodness, his sentimental affection for the working classes, and his devotion to the ideal of "The Home." To state that I view "very critically" his opinion of my favourite authors is to be guilty of childish satire at the expense of the blind fury which possesses me in respect of what I call "R. B.'s intolerance." But Mr. Thompson's statement that I entertain a very critical

view of "R. B.'s" temperament is even more damaging; and if my fortune were less coincidental with that of the "Clarion," I should invoke the expensive aid of Mr. Justice Darling. I view Mr. Blatchford's temperament critically! Since when have I taken to criticising temperaments? How can one criticise a temperament? One might as logically criticise a man's fourth rib. But if my sense of humour permitted me to set up as a critic of temperaments, I should have to offer a most favourable report on "R. B.'s" temperament. It is—since it would now appear that temperaments must be subject to adjectives—a benign, understanding, steadfast temperament. A dancing temperament. A wise, a hopeful, heartening temperament. It is a temperament which draws out music from itself like a harp which is touched by breath. It is a temperament which loves lame dogs. It is a temperament which gave me help and encouragement when I sorely needed them. It is the temperament of my friend. It is my friend. The temperament is the man.

#### Temperament.

It is because I cannot criticise "R. B.'s" temperament—which is to say "R. B."—that I can so freely and fruitfully criticise "R. B.'s" opinions. We have thoughts in common—feminine, "artistic" thoughts. We are, therefore, able to talk together about the things which are most fruitful in a common tongue, and argue with a common heat and with a common object. If I were able to criticise "R. B.'s" temperament, I should not be able to criticise his opinions. If he did not possess himself—that which has hereinbefore been termed his temperament—he would, from my standpoint, be an animal, like his neighbours, and his opinions would, from my standpoint, be just—opinions.

You will see that so far as Mr. Blatchford's personality is concerned I approach him in a spirit of strong and reverent partisanship. And I am glad to say that the work which lies before me will be chiefly concerned with his personality. When I have finished with the story of "R. B.'s" life, I shall have something—not much—to say about his work, and, consequently, about his opinions; and I shall say some things which I have often said to him before, and shall often say again, on many a jolly high road, in many a jolly inn. But all that is to come at the end of the papers. I feel convinced that that which you chiefly want to hear is the story of Mr. Blatchford's life: the fairy story of an ill-taught, ill-fed child, a colour printer's devil, who grew up to be a man—a Big Man.

#### A Big Man.

I say that Robert Blatchford is a big man. It is a big thing to have taken in hand a forlorn, discredited cause like the Socialism which was and to make of it, in fifteen years, a living, vital, pregnant thing like the Socialism which is. No honest man will deny that Blatchford's pen alone has produced—has invented, if you like—"the rank and file" of Socialism. I say that it is a big thing to have done this. It is also a big thing—and here I speak with the heartfelt veneration of a craftsman—to write the cleanest, straightest English which has been written in our time.

In writing this sketch, therefore, I shall be governed by the following preconceptions:

- (1) That Mr. Blatchford is a very close and intimate friend.  
 (2) That I regard him as a Big Man—a genius.  
 (3) That I disagree with quite half of his opinions.

Within the limitations imposed upon me by these premises, I hope to produce an honest book.

The plan which I propose to follow is this: I shall devote the earlier and major portion of the monograph to a narrative of Mr. Blatchford's career, with occasional reflections of a psychological character, put in for the look of the thing. I shall then discuss his writings and opinions, and will endeavour to trace, as with a skilled hand, the influence upon them of his early environment and experiences. I shall conclude with a grand display of fireworks—a sketch of "The Man as he is." That will be an awful business—both for Mr. Blatchford and myself. But we realise that it will be expected of us and—*noblesse oblige*.

Thanking you kindly, one and all.

### I.—CHILDHOOD.

There used to live in Halifax a little old lady who was great friends with the milkman's horse. One day, when this old lady was examining a shop-window in a crowded thoroughfare, the milkman's horse (a tall, white animal) recognised her back, and ascending the pavement, accompanied by his cart and milk-cans, placed a familiar nose upon her shoulder. The little old lady, turning round, remarked, merely, "Hullo, here's Pete," and at once entered into a long and affectionate conversation with the milkman's horse, much to the interest of passers-by.

This story is told by the old lady's own son's wife, who witnessed the incident. That son is the subject of this sketch; and so, perhaps, the story will not be considered irrelevant.

### A Brave Mother.

And, indeed, this story and all stories concerning Louisa Blatchford have a special relevance in this place, for it is impossible to consider the complex character of Robert Blatchford without reference to the temperament and influence of his mother.

Louisa Blatchford was, for all psychological purposes, Robert's only parent. Mr. Blatchford himself knows little of his father. He was a strolling actor and an ardent Tory, who christened his second and last-born son Robert Peel Granville, doubtless believing that names like these would form an attractive substitute for a patrimony. There is a story current in the Blatchford family concerning little Robert's christening (John Blatchford was a great Churchman). When the baptismal party had arrived at the font and the officiating clergyman had learnt that the infant in his arms was to be christened Robert Peel, he said to the father: "After the great statesman?" and on receiving an affirmative reply, he expressed the hope that little Robert would grow up to be as clever a man. "Ah," said John Blatchford, "I hope he will be half as clever." It is to be hoped that the shade of John Blatchford, supposing that that long-spent spirit concerns itself with earthly or democratic matters, is satisfied with the answer which has been vouchsafed to his pious wish.

John Blatchford was not able to witness the fulfilment of his hope; for he died in 1853, when Robert was two

years old. Thenceforward, Louisa Blatchford became the sole guardian of her two sons (Montague, the elder, was born in 1848, three years before Robert), and how, a frightened, friendless, lonely woman, faced with the most terrible poverty, she bravely discharged this guardianship will presently be seen.

Mr. Blatchford says that his mother was a "queer customer," and difficult to describe. But, yielding to the importunities of the present writer, he has written a little sketch of his mother, as she appeared to him. This charming document will appear in due place.

It is quite evident that Mr. Blatchford has to thank his mother, not merely for his preliminary appearance upon the stage of life, her care and love, but for his own originality of thought and feeling. If he derives from his father any characteristic at all, it is probably that streak of simplicity, of *naïveté*, in faith and outlook (such, for instance, as his simple, intense, straightforward patriotism) which is at once a puzzle and a charm to those who know him. If it is the paternal fount from which "R. B." derives his unaffected belief in simple human goodness, it may certainly be said that the paternal legacy was, after all, no mean one.

### No Cynic.

Most clever men—nearly all clever men—are by nature cynical. "R. B.'s" utter absence of cynicism, of the cynic's doubt and bitterness, while apt to be a trying quality in argument, is obviously in itself a thing to be envied. "R. B." has a hopeful, benignant attitude towards life, an attitude of calm affection which is different in itself, as it is different in its source, from the contemptuous calm of the cynic. The cynic may marvel at this attitude, but he cannot help but envy it. If he happen to subject the matter to speculation and if he had swapped tobacco and secrets with "R. B.," he will probably conclude that John Blatchford is at the bottom of the matter.

It will presently be necessary to put forward the proposition that "R. B." is, in essential matters of the spirit, an ardent and irrevocable Tory—that which is called "a Tory of the old school." But this proposition, together with the considerations upon which it is based, will be presented in subsequent and more critical chapters. It is mentioned here in order that the reader may be asked not to confuse this intellectual, emotional, perfectly sane Toryism of Robert with the flat-footed, latter-day, obvious Toryism of his father. In so far as the father's blood has given any political colour to that of the son, it is in matters of mere family prejudice and sentiment. John Blatchford's father had served as a middy under Nelson, and had been wounded at the Battle of the Nile. When, during the Boer War, his grandson scandalised Small Heath—or was it Bootle?—by instructing his daughter to play "God Save the Queen" once a day to the glory of British arms, he was doubtless actuated by the direct and obvious influence of heredity.

And then, again, his Christian name was Peel. And then, again, he had served for seven years as an English soldier. And then, again, he had the fortune to be born in England, and Englishmen were being killed—for an idea or for money. He believed the idea to be mistaken and the money to be dearly earned, but not being

cynical like his critics, he overlooked the absurdity of Tommy Atkins' performance and fastened his mind upon the fact that Tommy Atkins was being made all dead and bloody by bullets. So he commanded his daughter to play "God Save the Queen," and a congress of six north-country intellectuals sternly turned his picture to the wall. His recovery was slow but sure.

Let us now pursue our narrative.

Before Robert Blatchford was ten years old, he had travelled in Scotland; in the North of England; in the Eastern Counties, and in the Isle of Wight. Portsmouth, Leicester, and London were among the cities which he had visited.

### A Rough Time.

Mr. Blatchford tells some perfectly horrible tales about that time. His mother was an actress, and at the age of 32 she was left with two little boys and no money. She had never acted in any but the poorest theatres or earned but the poorest wage; and it was not to be supposed that the widow, alone and friendless, could make a better trade of it than husband and wife together had done. For years she struggled on, working sometimes with small touring companies, more often travelling alone with the two children (often on foot) seeking an engagement in one small town after another, and not always finding it. The little family tasted of poverty in all its forms; mother and children alike were always cold, and often hungry, but sometimes they were literally starving. "R. B." says that his strongest and most poignant recollection of that period is of the agonies of cold which they endured. Nothing, he says, is so precious to poor people or so hardly to be won as warmth. As a little boy he learned to hate and dread the winter months; and cold weather makes him depressed and broody even now. When he was a very young child he used to get up early and grub in other people's dustbins for old bottles, which he would barter for coals.

It was an awful time, and does not call for emphasis.

### Yorkshire.

In 1862, when Robert was eleven years old, the family went to Halifax. They tramped there from Bradford. Louisa Blatchford possessed relations, of a distant kind, in the former town, and they had promised to help her in finding work of a less ebullient and spasmodic nature than that afforded by the stage. The joint efforts were successful, and Mrs. Blatchford, with needles, and thread, and a dressmaker's measure, took up life anew, discharging the stage for ever with a thankful heart. Mr. Blatchford says that his mother hated the stage. As a matter of fact, this hatred had its basis in a very practical dread. The stage life had won her nothing but hardship; and the people with whom it brought her into contact were probably small-minded, and unhappy, and selfish, and unkind. Her whole life, in its relation to her sons, expresses the fear which she felt lest either of the boys should ever be thrown back again into that dreadful life of penury and vagabondage.

After they all had settled down in Halifax, both the boys went out to work. Robert, child as he was, took employment as an errand boy (*i.e.*, beer fetcher) in a colour printing works. He worked in this capacity for twelve hours every day, and received a weekly wage of eighteen-pence.

(To be continued.)

## THE CAUSERIE.

By Julia Dawson.

Phil May's magic pen pictured a dirty, crabbed, and sour old man of the sea trying to sell crabs to a clean, expansive, white-aproned fishmonger. You could tell he was smelly, and that to pass him by would be equal to a bad breeze from Billingsgate. One of the secrets of Phil May's greatness was the atmosphere he got into his work.

The fishmonger doubted the freshness of the crabs. "Why," said the astonished old salt, "they're alive!" "Aye," answered the still reluctant fishmonger, edging further away, "but you're alive, you know!"

Letters from real live men and women who have made this Causerie their own remind me irresistibly of that picture. There are many degrees of liveness. But for pure, sparkling life and health, *mens sana in corpore sano*, readers of THE WOMAN WORKER reach the top notch.

### Ought Women to Tell?

My reply to the above question brought in a batch of letters, some of which would ferret the heart out of a door-nail. Mercy me! the misery that women needlessly suffer! Several of these letters must be answered privately—when time permits. But there is one message to all alike: that when I said women ought *not* to tell I meant it. Nor is my opinion altered in any way by an article written by a man in a Sunday paper, a cutting of which some have enclosed in their letters. Men have always been unfair to women in this respect (as they are about housework), almost as unfair as women to women; and the writer of that article is no exception. If some readers require still further assurance, well, they had better write to me. But none should. Rather, let them dry their tears, calm their fears, and look up to where the sun shines and out to where the flowers grow.

### Was It Genuine?

By the way, an old friend—a Pressman—said to me, "That was very good, Julia, but was the letter genuine?" Here his eye spoke volumes of suspicion.

Genuine! He should see our letter-box! Then he would know better than I can make him understand that there is no necessity for any writer in THE WOMAN WORKER to venture into the realms of fiction. Hard facts are hard enough. And they hurt enough. Hurt so sometimes that we would sit down and cry if that would do any good—which, of course, it would not.

A letter from a

### Young Jewess

In Leeds, who finds some sunshine in our paper, has led me to compare a bit of fiction with fact.

Here is the fiction, taken from "Songs of the Ghetto," by Morris Rosenfeld: a beautiful little book, by the way, which reminds me always of a live red bloodstone ring on a dead white finger. Do you see the connection?

### A Tear on the Iron.

Oh, cold and dark is the shop! I hold the iron, stand and press: my heart is weak, I groan and cough, my sick breast scarcely heaves.

I groan and cough, and press and think: my eye grows damp, a tear falls: the iron is hot, my little tear, it seethes and seethes, and will not dry up.

I feel no strength, it is all used up; the iron falls from my hand, and yet the tear, the silent tear, the tear boils more and more. My head whirrs, my heart breaks, I ask in woe: "Oh, tell me, my friend in adversity and pain: O, tear, why do you not dry up in seething?"

Are you perhaps a messenger, and announce to me that other tears are coming? I should like to know it; say, when will the great woe be ended?

I should have asked more and more of the Unrest, the turbulent tear: but suddenly there began to flow more tears, tears without measure, and I at once understood that the river of tears is very deep. . . .

Now for the fact. Another letter in purple ink. Is purple to be our colour?

Sometimes, dear Julia, life seems not worth living at all. Oh, the cruel injustice and ingratitude we have to put up with.

I am a miserable tailress. How my limbs ache, and my head throbs after a day's work, and oh! the misery of it! No thanks. No joys.

I am only told, "You must hurry on with your work, or we will get somebody more competent than you."

How long are we going to stand this life? The papers are full each evening about the vice of Leeds. Yes, prostitution, and why not? Who is concerned about us? Who cares whether we are properly provided for?

I am weak, and feel each day getting worse. What will be the end? And my master says I am not quick enough. (I work daily.) Oh! for the power to cry aloud the crying injustice and wrongs that are done to our helpless sisters and brothers! I feel so sick, sick, sick of it all. Perhaps you will say I lack courage. Ah! but I am tired and weary, and perhaps I am not as brave as some women, and the battle of life is so hard. Dear Julia, will you answer this letter in THE WOMAN WORKER?

You must think I must be a poor pitiful creature to speak so hopeless, but life for me has been sickly monotony. Life! A dog lives too! I alone will suffer, no child of mine will reproach me with bringing it up in the world.

Excuse this long letter, but you do not know what a relief it is to pour out your troubles in somebody's ear, someone that sympathises with you. A Jewess.

A fine psalm of life, is it not, to be sung in Merrie England? Who is concerned? We are concerned. This paper is printed and published to help all undervalued, unhappy women. Will the Jewess send me her address?

How long are the workers going to stand that life? Just as long as they want to, and no longer.

We wonder ourselves why they have stood it so long.

Nothing more absurd can be imagined than the workers who make all the good things in life with their own hands and brains being denied those good things; and others who make nothing having all.

It is wrong from the very foundation, as THE WOMAN WORKER will never cease to tell.

### What One Woman Can Do.

Out of 243 children in London schools seen by one doctor, only three possessed and used tooth-brushes!

Now, who is to blame for this shocking want of cleanliness and care? Not the parents, who probably have not the coppers to buy enough bread, let alone tooth-brushes. But the nation, which

will need the health and strength of those children when grown up to maintain its own strength.

As an instance of what one school-mistress can do, out of 290 girls in a school in Shepperton Road, 227 had the necessary attention given to their teeth.

That is a big percentage in these days. But what are the poor to do who cannot afford dentists' and doctors' fees? Only two courses are open at present: accept charity or suffer neglect. Of the two the latter is generally preferred. Our doctors and dentists ought to be nationalised even before the land we live on—if one or other is to wait. For what is the use of anything without health? And what has any man, woman, or child done that this best of all blessings and most important of all rights should be denied?

### Woman versus Man.

There, now, I had had my half-an-hour nap, and felt fairly happy, when I went downstairs to find the rector there. He would not give votes to married women. "What! If they are both equal in intellect and take different views on certain public questions?" said I. He stroked his Irish terrier on the head, promised it some tea, and said the wife would have to give in.

Men are beginning to say this unblushingly. In the Argentina things have come to a pretty pass. What with women practising medicine, surgery, dentistry, and obstetrics, playing music of their own composition in public, and excelling in literature, art and science generally, the men are getting

### Thoroughly Frightened.

They say that women are too highly educated, and no longer make themselves necessary to the interests and happiness of men. So, a new society of Feminists has just been formed, which I commend to E. Belfort Bax, called *Escuela de Hogar*, "The School of the Hearth." All the arts and crafts of the home are taught in this school, "which alone can render the woman a welcome and fit partner for man." So the queer old pendulum of a queer old world swings.

I would like to see the queer old women, too, who are likely to attend that school as a last and desperate chance of becoming necessary to the happiness of queer old men.

### Cruelty to Babies.

An American doctor—of course, he is American—says the first thing a baby would say if, it could would be, "It's so beastly light." Babies hate light. To take them out in prams which cramp their limbs and in prams which cramp towards the glare of light is both cruel and dangerous.

Happily, English mothers seem to know this by instinct. The poorest will shield their babies' faces with a corner of a shawl, an old pocket-handkerchief, or even a bit of butter-muslin, when they take them "broodies."

(Answers to Correspondents, page 723.)

Almost everything that is great has been done by youth.—DISRAELI.

Give Beauty all her right!

She's not to one form tied;  
 Each shape yields fair delight  
 Where her perfections hide:  
 Helen, I grant, might pleasing be,  
 And Rosmond was as sweet as she.

CAMPION.

### THE THREE BABY BUNTINGS.

By Robert Blatchford.

THERE were three baby buntings,  
And a rambling they did go;  
They toddled and they waddled,  
And they tumbled down also,  
Look ye there!  
They toddled and they waddled,  
And the first thing caught their een  
Was a bonny yellow butterfly  
That fluttered o'er the green.  
Bert said it was a butterfly,  
But Jennie she said "Nay,  
It's just a pansy flower that's spread  
Its wings and flown away."  
Look ye there!

They rattled and they prattled  
Till they heard a merry sound  
Like the chirping of a grasshopper  
From out the daisied ground,  
Look ye there!  
Dick said it was a grasshopper,  
But Jennie laughed so blithe,  
And said a fairy mower was  
A-whetting of his scythe,  
Look ye there!

They toddled and they waddled,  
And the next thing they did find  
Was a bed of dainty jonquils,  
And that they left behind,  
Look ye there!  
Dick said they were sweet Nancies,  
But Jennie said she thought  
They were little baby sisters which  
The doctor hadn't brought,  
Look ye there!

They rattled and they prattled,  
And the next thing that they knew  
Was the singing of a skylark  
High above them in the blue,  
Look ye there!  
Bert said it was a skylark,  
But Jennie made a vow  
'Twas a little angel ploughboy who  
Was whistling at the plough,  
Look ye there!

They toddled and they waddled,  
Till they traced the garden round,  
And a puddle in a corner was  
The last thing that they found,  
Look ye there!  
Dick said it was a puddle,  
But Jennie, in surprise,  
Said, "Nay, this is our kitchen, where  
We come to make mud pies,"  
Look ye there!

They rattled and they prattled,  
And they made mud pies for scores,  
And they daubed their hands and faces  
And their nice clean pinafores,  
Look ye there!  
And their mamma came to scold them,  
And to threaten them with bed,  
But they looked so very happy that  
She kissed them all instead,  
Look ye there!

She took them in and washed them  
Cleaner than a silver pin,  
And then she told their dada  
Of the mischief they'd been in,  
Look ye there!  
She called them naughty children, but  
Their dada answered, "Nay,  
Pinafores were made to wash, my lass,  
And lambs were made to play,"  
Look ye there!

### ART THE SHAPER.

There is a beautiful angel called Art,  
able to surround life with idealising  
forms and colours, and introduce man  
into an enchanted islet which participates  
the perfection of the world. Before the  
mind has trained itself into a knowledge  
of the principles of beauty, and culti-  
vated a susceptibility to poetic and artis-  
tic creations, it is apt to suppose that  
Art can only build a palace of illusions;  
but it is a realm of realities Art creates  
for us. It works on the emotions; and if  
any feeling be awakened and excited, it  
matters not whether it is a material or a  
spiritual object, the effect is the same;  
the joy is the same.

A sweet song which beguiles me away  
from my griefs; a subtle strain of melody  
which weaves enchantment around me  
and raises me into a sphere of purity and  
hope; a poem which evokes all lovely re-  
membrances, and surrounds me with  
visions of a fair world; a picture that fills  
my eyes with happy tears;—why are these  
thought inferior to things that may be  
touched and grasped, eaten or drunk?  
The material world can do no better for  
me than awaken just such emotions. And  
as this material world is as yet so unde-  
veloped that it oftener causes sadness and  
pain, it is necessary for the heart to avail  
itself of this angel of Art to form round  
it a more beautiful and humanised world,  
which shall excite the emotions that en-  
large and glorify existence.—M. D.  
CONWAY.

Be then without craving, and without  
thought of a Mine, and put away thy  
féver and thy fight.—"The Bhagavad."

## TEA-GIRLS AND OTHERS in Johannesburg.

By Sybil Cormack Smith.

The tea-room girl in Johannesburg is  
a being apart from everyone.

I do not suppose that anywhere else  
in the world a black frock and white  
apron—symbols of simplicity and trans-  
parency, if anything might be—could be  
the outward signs of so much inward con-  
flict. Her life looks so easy—carrying a  
tray with cups, smiling affably, and  
getting her living in return for that;  
and, in reality, it is so horribly difficult.

She does not lead a life of black and  
white, of simplicity, or transparent  
honesty; how can she? In the great  
majority of cases, the uniform is nothing  
but the public sign, a passport to free-  
dom, while beneath are all the miserable  
subterfuges, the shams, the dishonesty,  
by which a woman must eke out a liveli-  
hood when she is employed in labour  
which does not afford one.

### Downward.

To very, very many this life is nothing  
but a push downward, which cannot be  
checked.

Humanity is not a rock that can  
withstand any assaults of storm and  
stress; we all know this very well. Few  
of us would hold out in untouched virtue  
if that meant nothing but misery, sordid-  
ness, and hunger. We should begin to  
think that virtue is not worth it. That  
is what these underpaid girls think who  
have to maintain an appearance of  
decency on a meagre pay. Perhaps they  
often wish to go back afterwards, but it  
is too late then: our civilisation has made  
it too late for a woman easily to turn back  
or to begin again. When she buys her  
experience at the cost of her own life-  
blood she cannot often make use of that  
experience after.

It stands for the use of other women,  
to be sure; but other people's experience  
does not teach us—and never will.

That is why I am so indignant when  
I see the efforts which some people make  
in this country to teach girls of the  
"lower class" that domestic labour is  
degrading to them.

They really do try to instil that creed,  
and the result is that the majority of the  
Afrikaner girls would descend to almost  
any depths rather than take it up,  
though here it is the sure path of the  
home. They go into tea-rooms because  
they imagine that is more dignified, more  
elevated, more independent than work-  
ing in a private home.

For one thing, they would think them-  
selves on the same plane with Kaffir  
"house-boys." For another, in South  
Africa no man will work for another if  
he can help it; no woman will serve a  
housewife if any other mode of life is  
possible to her. Personal service is  
abhorrent. It is the South African way  
of being free and independent—a good  
way in one aspect, but a bad one when  
any sort of "freedom" is welcome:  
idleness, dependence upon the goodwill or  
charity of others, starvation, and loss of  
womanhood or manhood.

Where is the degradation in house-  
work more than in waiting on a smirking  
man with a tea-tray, while you pocket his

insults with his sixpences and dare not  
resent the one on account of the other?

### The "Big Wage" Fiction.

It may be asked, How does it happen  
that starvation wages are paid in a  
country which has always been looked  
upon as the woman's paradise?

Well, the solution is in the question.  
South Africa has been looked upon as a  
woman's paradise, and, therefore, has  
been flooded with women—not always of  
the right sort. These women have come  
here to look for husbands chiefly, and  
they have found them, in most cases; but  
they found them through the medium of  
shops and tea-rooms and offices, and in  
doing it they didn't care much how they  
cheapened the market for the genuine  
workers.

From one side there was the crowd of  
girls from over-seas who wanted billets  
in Johannesburg; from the other side,  
the crowds of Afrikaners who wanted  
them, too, to save themselves from the  
"drudgery" of any sort of domestic  
work.

It began, of course, with the smaller  
shops. There is a town of small alien  
shopkeepers inhabiting the by-streets of  
this place, and they are the ones who  
started the system of overworking and  
underpaying work-girls. The system  
spread, as anything bad does spread if  
we do not stop it, be it a disease or only  
a lie; to-day it is very wide, very over-  
reaching, very demoralising. It has even  
stretched itself into the houses of the  
righteous; many of the big shops have  
descended to the level of the lowest, and  
get all they can out of their workers for  
the smallest possible outlay.

So the crowds of tea-girls with their  
white aprons and black records are the  
foam that rises on top of that wave of  
debasement.

[As readers of former articles on the sub-  
ject will know, Johannesburg is a town  
with its own conditions.—Ed.]

### A CULTURED VOICE.

It was a rare voice; so that in speak-  
ing and in ordinary conversation, though  
there was no one whose utterance was  
more natural and less unstudied, it  
forcibly affected you. She could not give  
you a greeting, bid you an adieu, or make  
a routine remark, without impressing you  
with her power and sweetness. It sounded  
like a bell, sweet and clear and thrilling;  
it was astonishing what influence a little  
word uttered by this woman, without  
thought, would have upon those she  
addressed. Of such fine clay is man  
made.—BEACONSFIELD.

The poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn  
of scorn,  
The love of love.

TENNYSON.

### PORTRAIT OF A GIRL.

The amiable Sophia was now in her  
eighteenth year. . . . So charming  
may she now appear! And you, the  
feathered choristers of Nature, whose  
sweetest notes not even Handel can excel,  
tune your melodious throats to celebrate  
her appearance. From love proceeds  
your music, and to it returns. Awaken,  
therefore, that gentle passion in every  
swain: for, lo! adorned with all the  
charms in which Nature can array her,  
bedecked with beauty, youth, sprightli-  
ness, innocence, modesty, and tenderness,  
breathing sweetness from her rosy lips,  
and darting brightness from her spark-  
ling eyes, the lovely Sophia comes!

Sophia, then, the only daughter of Mr.  
Western, was a middle-sized woman, but  
rather inclining to tall. Her shape was  
not only exact, but extremely delicate,  
and the nice proportion of her arms prom-  
ised the truest symmetry in her limbs.  
Her hair, which was black, was so luxuri-  
ant that it reached her middle, before she  
cut it to comply with the modern fashion;  
and it was now curled so gracefully in her  
neck that few could believe it to be her  
own. If envy could find any part of the  
face which demanded less commendation  
than the rest, it might possibly think her  
forehead might have been higher without  
prejudice to her. Her eyebrows were  
full, even, and arched beyond the power  
of art to imitate. Her black eyes had a  
lustre in them which all her softness  
could not extinguish. Her nose was ex-  
actly regular. Her cheeks were of the  
oval kind; and in her right she had a  
dimple, which the least smile discovered.  
Her chin had certainly its share in form-  
ing the beauty of her face; but it was  
difficult to say it was either large or  
small, though perhaps it was rather of  
the former kind. Her complexion had  
rather more of the lily than of the rose;  
but when exercise or modesty increased  
her natural colour, no vermilion could  
equal it. Her neck was long and finely  
turned; and here, if I was not afraid of  
offending her delicacy, I might justly say  
the highest beauties of the famous Venus  
de Medici were outdone. Here was  
whiteness which no lilies, ivory, nor al-  
baster could match. The finest cambric  
might indeed be supposed from envy to  
cover that bosom which was much whiter  
than itself.

Such was the outside of Sophia; nor  
was this beautiful frame disgraced by an  
inhabitant unworthy of it. Her mind  
was every way equal to her person; nay,  
the latter borrowed some charms from the  
former; for when she smiled, the sweet-  
ness of her temper diffused that glory  
over her countenance which no regularity  
of features can give.

HENRY FIELDING.

Friendship is no plant of hasty growth;  
Though planted in esteem's deep-fixed soil,  
The gradual culture of kind intercourse  
Must bring it to perfection.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

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## Votes and a Genial Sceptic.

By Helen Simpson.

Let me introduce Mrs. Jowett to you as one whose opinions on the Woman Question should carry some weight, because of her great age and greater experience. She is short, stout, and homely. Her eyes glint like two beads as she smiles behind the spectacles furnished by the County Hospital.

Her children have all married and left her, and her husband died a year or so back, much to the general loss of our community. He was a little given to worshipping at the Sign of the Pewter Platter, but otherwise was "a good neighbour"—an epithet not so often bestowed on folk in our village as you might think.

So Mrs. Jowett is very much alone, and she confesses to me that but for her garden and the weekly newspaper, she might find things dull.

Her garden stands back from the lane some way, and is fenced with oak palings from it. There she is sure to be seen any fine day, engaged in some of the various little jobs that always require doing in a garden. But, whether tying up creepers, sowing seeds, pruning roses, or sweeping the path, she always manages to be beaming over the gate at you as you come alongside with a cheery greeting.

All you see is a homely face, framed in sandy-grey wisps of untidy hair, enveloped in a chrome and magenta shawl. If it is afternoon, and she is not in her "disables" (*déshabille*, of course), you may be, as I often am, asked inside for a cup of tea and a crack.

You will find few such interiors left in Sussex as this of her little cottage.

A great beam holds up the roof, and rafters cross from it to the walls. The chimney is a cavernous opening, with seats each side and odd iron implements hanging in its sooty mouth. The hearth is clean and well "reddled."

Soon Mrs. Jowett has tea made and scones toasted. I always enjoy this meal—not because of the food; none of your fragrant Bohea for her: she likes tea with a strong grip, and her scones are sometimes (more often than not) burnt or doughy—but I enjoy it because of her hearty talk and hospitality, her large fund of story and reminiscence, and, in many matters, her profound wisdom.

On this day Mrs. Jowett was a little sad.

"Jarge," she said to me, nodding the while at a spotted daguerreotype, "he've been gone two year to-day to a day. He'd ha' been seventy-six if he'd been spared that stroke as took him."

Thinking to turn the talk into a more cheerful channel, I asked the old dame what were "Jarge's" politics.

"Well, by rights, I believe he was a true Blue Tory, like his father before him. But he was allus a rollin' stone in his 'pinions. First 'twas Dizzy, an' then 'twas old Gladstone, an' then someone he called Joey. I never rightly knew 'oother from which when he was on the go—he talked of 'em all alike the same way at different times.

"He got quite upset with me one day, when he say that some one of 'em was the greatest villain in England; and I, thinking to show I was up alongsides of 'im in politics, I say: 'Yes, Jarge, that Glad-

stone's a regular bad lot.' He nearly bit my head off, he was that angry, for he had meant someone else all the time. Who, I don't know to this day, for he went off in a huff.

"No; I don't 'old with havin' a vote myself; though, bless you, I don't see why those who want 'em shouldn't get 'em—man or woman.

"But I never had time to study politics like Jarge did. 'Twas my business to rare nine children on fifteen shellin' a week and look after Jarge—who, along of his love of politics, spent too much time and money at the pub. sometimes. Why, often on Saturdays I've met him an' gone off to Goldbridge shoppin', because I couldn't trust 'im to do it alone, leaving Emma, my eldest, to look after the children at home. Jarge 'ud ha' bought any mortal thing in Goldbridge market, if so be as the cheap jack a sellin' it was a good cryot.

"He was that fond of listenin' to any one with the gift of the gab as you wouldn't believe.

"I never trusted him after the time he brought home that." Mrs. Jowett pointed to a gilt-framed picture of the Houses of Parliament, the clock tower being in mother-of-pearl veneer, and Big Ben a cheap clock that—as she informed me—had never done a day's work in its life, "along of not having any innards. That was a week to get through; but I managed it somehow; and afterwards Jarge an' me come to a reckoning about his money.

"He took half-a-crown a week for beer, baccy, clubs, and politics, and I managed with the rest. 'Twasn't much, but I did know azackally how much—which I hadn't always before.

"An' that's how I come to look at this business of politics as somethin' to keep the men out of the way and out o' mischief, though I never understood them myself, an' now I'm too old to take up with them. I jest potter about in my garden, an' leaves all the young ones to manage things. They've more time and larning than an old woman like me.

"I expect I shall never live long enough to see all the wonderful changes this vote's going to work in everything and everybody. Though I mind Jarge was very set on his when he first had it. It made a new man of him—for a week or thereabouts.

"Well, well; if you must be going, you must. But mark my words, those who live longest 'll see most. 'Tis a useful saying these days."

### A LADY BARRISTER.

Signorina Olga Lollini, daughter of Deputy Lollini, pleaded, last week, before the Council of Discipline of the Italian Bar for admission to the practice of procuratore (barrister without the right of public pleading); and the case was decided in her favour.

The decision is taken as a signal victory for the cause of women's rights.

A man must be a man and a woman a woman.—SANCHO PANZA.

## LOVE AND OTHER "NONSENSE."

To love a good woman is a liberal education; a commercial education is to love a lady of fashion. A girl who is satisfied with her wardrobe can bear many privations. Love is an exquisite flower; but, if we would pluck it, we must be brave enough to seek it where it grows—on the edge of an awful precipice.

The most beautiful nose in the world may be unsympathetic. At all events it is not sufficient company and interest at the breakfast table.

We often marry the man we understand less than anyone else in the world. Mystery is so very attractive.

A man is perfectly capable of making a sacrifice for a woman in the heat of emotion, but there are nine chances to one that he never forgives her for it afterwards.

Men would very rarely feel flattered if they knew the truth. That is why really good, kind women try their best to keep it from them.

They say a watched pot never boils, but a watched husband does—pretty quick.

A woman can stamp her foot at a man and love him simultaneously.

Men . . . after considering a woman for months, invariably decide that they loved her at first sight.

A woman cannot crystallise a man who is merely a copy of another; and a man's most dangerous rival is the man who is least like him.

There are two things which every man or woman believes about himself or herself—namely, that he or she has a strong sense of humour and is a small eater. Most people are convinced that they are poor sleepers as well, but this is not quite so universal an article of belief as the other two.—"Belinda's Year-Book."

### MOTHER.

(From the French—anonymous.)

Near to my own was set her sleeping-place;

She used to kiss me ere she turned to rest,

And as her soft sigh melted in night's space,

A tide of thankfulness o'erflowed my breast.

Hiving the swarm of fancies in my brain,

Used I belated vigil oft to keep,

When, mid the restless silence, silent strain,

Came that dear voice: "O! come, my son, and sleep."

I wake, and work; I shiver all alone,

Until my neck bows like a broken reed;

Whilst in the house my footfall wakens none,

And no one tells me of the rest I need.

Beneath the mound a place is kept for me

Next hers; and Death I now nor fear, nor shun:

For near her on the last night shall I be,

When she will murmur: "Come and sleep, my son!"

DOUGLAS HURN.

Therefore, the loftier rose the song

To touch the secret things of God,

The deeper pierced the hate that trod

On base men's track who wrought the wrong.

W. G. ROSSETTI.

## The Vagaries of Jane Matilda.

By Keighley Snowden.

Ellen Ann Murgatroyd opened the door and called in, to ask if we had her Jane Matilda there. That is to say, she called out and came in. It did not seem to me that she expected to find Jane Matilda; she said, in fact, at once, and without waiting for an answer, that she did not know what we thought about young lasses being out of doors at that time of night, but they would have themselves to thank.

Unpinning a shawl as she pushed the door to with her heel, she informed us that Jane Matilda had setten off for Leeds pantomime with some of her mates.

"But what she wants wi' settin' off, I don't know," said Ellen Ann, who was out of breath. "Last Parish Feast, she runned away to Morcambe, an' then agaan at Back End"—that is, in the Autumn—"off she goes to Bradford to some mak' of a do-ment, I think she called it a Cinder Emma, an' lost a shillin' down a grate-hole. And that's t' way 'er brass burns 'er pocket. She shut just as weel never hae no brass, it's weared as t' comes; I said this mornin' she'd save hersen a deal o' trouble to sit t' middle o' t' floor an' stop there. For iver settin' off, settin' off—what she sees in t' I cannot tell," said Ellen Ann, and dropped upon a chair.

My hostess laughed in a friendly way. My host, who was nursing a pipe unmoved, looked steadily out across the hearth at the visitor, with his mouth open.

"Wha," he drawled, "thou mun go wi' her sometimes, Ellen Ann. Then thou'll know what to think."

"I know what to think, lad, reight enough," she nodded. "She does as she sees others do. But not as she sees me do; nou, never! Nauther for Cinder Emma nor Cinder Dick; but I'm short o' wind. . . . Eh, deary me!"

Certainly Ellen Ann did not strike me as a likely woman to travel far and often. She was large. Joe o' Mally's, as he sat huddled forward over the hand on his knee that held the pipe, might weigh, perhaps, a third of her. And she was breathing heavily.

"Did ta run?" he gently asked; but she was not to be soothed like that.

"I'd clout the 'er if ta mattered owght," she said. "Fower times she's setten off this 'ear, once for a week-end. I never been off but once i' mi life, and then I were made go. That cost hauf-a-sorereign but for twopence, an' I've never forgiven myself, for 't were iver penny wasted. Our Tom took me."

The note of resignation in her voice conveyed to me "our Tom's" relationship. He was Jane Matilda's father.

"I can hear folk talk like him sometimes, now—about smell o' t' seaside an' what it does for 'em, an' that. Eh, what foolishness! Fower days' wage for a smell. I s' never forgit that day if I live to be as owd's Methusalem; walkin' at t' edge o' t' watter. That's all our Tom iver looked at, as how it be. Ten shillin' to see watter. Noa more for me, Liza," said Ellen Ann. "Nay. I'll mak' do wi' a walk round t' mill dam an' a penn'orth o' mussels. Our Jane Matilda tried to get me off to Morcambe wi' her. . . ."

"T' mill dam does smell fresh," said Joe, while she was taking breath again. "But I allus think it wants a brass band or summat."

"Away she goes and lands home at fower o'clock i' t' mornin'," said Mrs. Murgatroyd. "No, she worn't tired! Oh, no! And what did 'er mother sit up for 'er for? That's all t' thanks I hed, an' I'd fallen asleep an' letten th' fire go out. When I were a lass I hed more thought. My shouthers stiff, an' my feet as cowl 's a stone, an' she starts a-tellin' me what a grand place Morcambe wor. But I packed 'er off to bed, sharp. Well: I can tee t' cat up, but young lasses all's brokken lowse."

"Oh, do yo' tee t' cat up?" Joe asked. And I saw that he still had his mouth open.

"Y-ay, I do!" said Ellen Ann. "But howiver—"

"And does't niver pool it' head off?"

"It hesn't done yet," said Ellen Ann, defiantly. "But as I were sayin'—"

"Well, that licks cockfeightin'," Joe remarked to me.

"—They're all ilike, is lasses. Some day our Jane Matilda 'll set off once too off: I s' hear of her i' Armley Gaol for votin'. . . . I hope yo' don't encourage her, Liza. It's time she were home, choose how, an' three or fower of her mates wi' her. . . . I declare I don't know what ails me latterly," said Ellen Ann, "but I come ower such heats!"

"It's change o' life," said Joe, quickly. "Change? It's nowght else! It's heels ower head, I think. When I were a lass—"

"But it's after ten o'clock now, an' she has me to deal wi', young fly-by-night. How is't she doesn't tak' up wi' no likely young chap—can yo' tell me that?"

"Such proud ways!"

"Nay, yo' mooran't be hard on her," said my good-natured hostess, speaking for the first time.

And with that this interesting talk ended. For the door opened—to admit a young lady for whom Joe rose as well as me to offer a chair. The visitor was good-looking; but I will say for Joe, at any rate, that I believe him to have risen with the instinctive politeness that refinement in a woman does impose upon us. Even Ellen Ann looked uncomfortable.

As I say, the newcomer was young. She may have been 26 or 27. I have long admired the friendly familiarity of this Yorkshire way of "dropping in" to a neighbour's house; but it does not often startle one so pleasantly. Here was a very prepossessing modern girl, who bade us "Good evening" with no trace of affectation or patronising consciousness.

"No, I won't sit down," she said. "It's your bedtime. I thought you'd be here, mother. Come straight home: you know you've no business to be out with your asthma so bad as it is."

It was Jane Matilda. And Ellen Ann went away with her without a word.

Glory darts her soul-pervading ray On thrones and cottages, regardless still Of all the artificial, nice distinctions Vain human customs make.

HANNAH MORE.

### PARTED.

Said the broad half of the scissors to the slender half one day, "My dear, I'm going to cut some cloth," and then he turned away.

The slender half, in sweet surprise, said, "Certainly, my dear; Pray cut the cloth, or what you like: don't let me interfere!"

"I'm going to cut some cloth," he said—and said it with a frown!

"I'm going to watch you, love," she said, and quietly sat down.

He said, "You are conceited; we're joined, and I'm the one—"

And then the rivet loosened, and listened to the fun.

"You are self-assertive," he went on, "and if I don't look out—"

You'll claim equality with me. That's what will come about."

"Equality with you!" she sneered; "to that I've not aspired!"

And then the rivet left his work, and hastily retired.

Two rusty halves then lay about 'midst lumber of the kind,

With anger burning in each eye, and vengeance in each mind.

"I ought to be the 'boss,'" he said; and she, with righteous wrath—

"His impudence to say to me, 'I'm going to cut the cloth!'"

They met—'twas in the dust-bin—and talked of days gone by:

What jolly pals they used to be, and how the time would fly.

"Let's make it up," he whispered, "and cut the cloth together."

"Too late!" she cried: "the rivet's gone; we're doomed to part for ever!"

(Mrs. D. E. CHEVELLY.)

### GREAT WOMEN.

In answer to those who blamed him for dedicating his works to women, St. Jerome said: "As if these women were not more capable of forming a judgment upon them than most men, the good folk who would have me prefer them to you in my estimation, O Paula and Eustochium, know as little of their Bible as they do of Greek and Roman history. They do not know that Huldah prophesied when men were silent, that Deborah overcame the enemies of Israel when Barak trembled, that Judith and Esther saved the people of God. So much for the Hebrews. As for the Greeks, who does not know that Plato listened to the discourses of Aspasia?—that Sappho held the lyre beside Alcens and Pindar?—that Themistocles was one of the philosophers of Greece? And, among ourselves, Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi—her and the daughter of Cato and wife of Brutus, before whom the virtue of the father and the austerity of the husband paled—do we not count them among the glories of Rome? It would take up whole books to relate all the instances of greatness among women."

"Sir, a very wise woman is a very foolish thing."—NEWCASTLE.

If it is better to live than to die, it is better to live in a good humour than a bad one.—DISRAELI.

## A Bard at the Braes.

By Margaret McMillan.

A few days later the Braes men came out of prison.

The sun shone gloriously down on green hill and laughing river when they came out, one following another from the gaol gates. The prison garb had been cast aside and they wore their own blue home-spun. Their faces had lost the deep tan. But in spite of all they walked with a swing, as if used to large spaces. The eyes of the older men had that look of keenness, of caution, and of courage which one sees only in the faces of old mariners, used to the moods and changes of treacherous seas. On the whole it was wonderful to see them all standing on the hill-top near the cannon, and to remember that they had come out of gaol!

"You know you're all asked out—to Jenner," said an old Invernessian, a farmer, who had been offering every day for weeks to "pye their fines."

No, they didn't know it. They were looking with wondering eyes at the glorious view—the silver rushing Ness, the green-clad hills, and the blue, fair country—far away.

"You'll see company the day," said the farmer, slowly, desiring to produce an impression. "You're going to the hotel, the Glenalbyn over thonder," he went on, waving his hand to the street beyond the river. "The minister will be there and elders, and the friends that stood by you here."

The Braes men looked pleased and grateful, all save one, who had just received news that his little girl was ill.

"I'd like to catch a train now," said the latter to his friend in Gaelic.

"No. Come with us, Finlay," said the latter, gently. "We're catching the boat in the morning, and you'd get there no sooner."

Down the hill-side they walked, passing the gaol door, and coming out on the sleepy little street. People turned to look at them as they walked in their blue home-spuns, and drinking in with obvious pleasure the sweetness of the free air.

At the hotel they found a crowd of friends waiting for them. The dining-room table was loaded and decorated as if for a wedding feast. But, despite their hunger and amazement (for, as one said afterwards, he had never seen the like before), no one displayed even a shade of wonder or haste. In the crowd of kind faces their eyes continually sought one, and rested upon it with warm radiance. It was the face of John Murdoch.

"Here's the minister," said a voice suddenly.

Every eye turned to greet the man who now entered. He was a very old man—past eighty, and not very tall. But he stood erect like a young tree.

The first impression he gave was one of radiant purity—of personal cleanliness carried to such a point that it really became quite obtrusive. His silver hair shone in a challenging way. His neatly-cut features, his blue, bright eyes, his well-closed and rather thin lips, his shaven chin—all gave an impression which seemed to say, "Cleanliness is a good thing." On the wettest day, when roads were muddy, Dr. MacKay's boots con-

tinued to shine like a mirror. It was said that he used to encourage his washerwoman by appearing at her tub and saying, "Wash my shirt clean—clean." As for his clothes, no speck of dust was ever seen upon them. This silvery white old gentleman stood now in the doorway—and shook his head at everybody.

"Mr. MacLean, you were asleep in church yesterday," he said, presently, focussing reproof on one of the elders.

"Och, no, indeed, Dr. MacKay," said MacLean, gently. "I was hearing every word you said with my eyes shut, anyway."

"There's many a way of taking a bit off the Sabbath," said Dr. MacKay—relenting a little, however. "Well, and how are you now?" he went on, addressing the oldest of the ex-prisoners in Gaelic. "It's an awful thing to fall into the hands of man; isn't that what you're thinking, Angus?"

The Islesman made no answer. But his friend addressed the minister.

"We are wanting to get home on account of the crop," he said, simply. "We can't work all the time on the Islands. And this is a time of year when we have to get in the oats."

"I'd like to see this town, though," said the youngest prisoner, a dark-haired young fisherman who was accustomed to obey the older prisoners in the boats promptly, and to treat them as a very admiring son might treat his father. "If we could stop a little while we could see a great deal here, I'm thinking."

"You'd see wickedness," said Dr. MacKay, promptly. "You'd see Sabbath-breaking, and dancing, and drunkenness. You'd hear them playing organs in the churches. Go home, young man, go home, and be thankful you have the means of grace in the Islands."

"You can't have the means of grace even without land," said a low, mutinous voice at the end of the table.

"You can have it on the water, then," said an elder, boldly. "What about the ministers that got boats and made churches of them at the Disruption time? Big congregations came on to the boat, and they could always tell how many were there, for the more people came on the deeper she sank in the water."

"That's true," said Dr. MacKay, with great energy. "The Disruption men were worthy successors of the Great Covenanters. When no land was given to build a free church, free churches were floated on the sea."

"But why was the land taken?" said John Murdoch. "Even if men can worship on the sea, they cannot grow food on the restless waters."

No one, however, listened to him. The remembrance of the great struggle for spiritual freedom appealed to all with a power that whirled away, even now, the thought of material things. The prisoners forgot the gaol; and their eyes turned to an aged elder who had taken an active part in the struggle nearly 40 years ago, and who was now muttering, as in a dream, words that had been on his lips in unforgettable hours:

"Thou art my—refuge and my

strength. A very present help in time of trouble."

"That's a great Psalm," said Dr. MacKay, reverently. "The men who sang it often did not fear the face of man. They counted not their lives dear to them, and they took the Bible as their guide—the Bible and the Catechism. But now, in these days, young man," he said, turning his stern glance on the young fisherman, "they don't think the Psalms are good enough. They're giving out hymns and Paraphrases in the churches. Yes," said Dr. MacKay, "but never have I given out a Paraphrase, and never will you hear it done—at the North Church."

The whole company were now in a state of more or less excitement and elevation. Only John Murdoch's face, despite the thrill to which he, too, was responsive, maintained, as if with effort, a look of dogged calm.

"The land laws set forth even in the Old Testament," he said, "are very remarkable. There you have, for example, the numbering of the people. And then, what an earnest, determined effort is manifested in all Jewish legislation to secure the natural rights to the soil for all—and to get the best out of the land. The Bible—"

"Don't you be twisting the Word, John, for your own ends," said the warning voice of an elder. "God's Word is not to be treated like a man's book. You may think there's sense in it—at times," proceeded the elder, "but mind you this, John—it isn't man wisdom. It's the Almighty's."

Here he suddenly drank up the contents of his glass, wiped his lips, and raised his arms as if in benediction.

The last speaker had, however, turned the thoughts of all away from the heroic past, and fixed them—for the moment at least—on the released prisoners, the men for whom the feast had been prepared.

"Don't you be grieving too much, Finlay," said Dr. MacKay, gently, to the sad-eyed ex-prisoner whose child was ill. "Your little one is in good hands. All things work together for good to them that fear Him. You'll get the boat early to-morrow, and you'll find her," he added—with true sympathy in his voice—"you'll find her better. You'll all go home," said Dr. MacKay, his eyes growing rather dim and very tender, "feeling you have friends you don't see that are thinking of you. They were thinking of you when you were in the gaol, yonder, and they'll think of you when you're far away, and pray for you that the Evil One shall have no power over you."

The Islesman rose with glistening eyes, and one and another thanked their hosts—with few words, but with looks that spoke more than any spoken language could express. Then, accompanied by the silver-haired minister, they went to the station (where they were received with restrained joy and unobtrusive but lively interest by all the railway officials), and took their places in the train.

"Farewell! Farewell!" they said again and again, while the train began to move slowly.

With a look of exaltation on their faces, a look of wonder, and dim, confused pain, they fixed their eyes on their friends on the platform and glided away, waving their hands and uttering the word "Farewell! Farewell!"

That sounds so strange in Gaelic:

## A BOOK OF THE HOUR.

Mostly Fools.\*

Why not? Let us admit that we are mostly fools. I will go further and admit that I am one.

If any man, or any woman either, has not enough fraternal feeling to be happier that way, there shall be no reproaches. Not an eyebrow lifted. Let us also avoid the missionary zeal of the fox who had lost his tail.

I only remark that, if everyone reads that contemptuous true saying of Tom Carlyle as if it applied only to the others, it will never do the least good: which, considering the old man's energy when he wrote it, would, as he might have said, be "pettiful." Considering, too, that we are a democracy, and in rather a bad way. Nobody doubts the saying: why not make a badge of it for democrats, the fearsome word "Fools" to be done prettily in needlework for blouses and coat-sleeves, and honestly worn in the hope of growing wiser?

Fearsome it is, of course. People insist on blaming one another when they use it. It can never be popular till we stop blaming. But I thought of wearing my own badge inside the sleeve and looking out for a few choice spirits who could meet sometimes and take their coats off. Ladies wishing to join the circle might carry a little hidden tab or something attached to their bodices, and fish it out for those occasions.

I should have real hopes of the Fools. We might find things out; and meantime we could behave as such, and be happy.

This you will take for a sort of gay bitterness, but I was never more in earnest, I assure you. Who in the world could have hopes of a society that sincerely called itself the Clever People?

But note this. If there were such a body we may be sure that lots of people would be proud to belong to it. They would be hopeless, but unashamed. And that seems to be rather funny. Why cannot we call ourselves fools and be unashamed, if it is a hopeful thing to do?

I am for any reform that will bring this about. We want more modesty and candour: "Consider the fool and be wise" means "Look at yourself," surely. If it does not, that must be why so little has come of it. A democracy, and mostly fools! What are we to do about it, especially as the clever people think they ought to take advantage?

Richard Whiteing's plan is not so gaily bitter. He writes about us, not as Fools, but as "Little People." We are dear little people.

Whiteing is a very gentle soul. But he has followed after wisdom as hard as he could all his life, and written about it sincerely and inoffensively, and taught a great many people to see things that they had not seen. Perhaps "Little People" fits us well enough. Admit that, we must; but, being little, we are frightened by the other. Carlyle was much too big. Besides, he blamed us.

Whiteing encourages. How good it is to find a passage like this:

\* "Little People," by Richard Whiteing. 6s. net. Cassell and Company.

The biggest of all the Little People was Spinoza, who wrought out the noblest of all speculations in philosophy and religion in the intervals of his work as an artisan. I like to think of this truly fine figure of a man, in the setting of his workshop, quite as much as in the setting of his study. Perhaps the two were one.

In every age select souls like his have laboured for Saturday night's wages and for the redemption of the world. Sometimes they have drugged in meager toil, and for a mere payment, in kind, of provender. I am not forgetful of Epictetus in the slave lairs of Rome. It is an enduring type, and we have but to use our eyes to find it, in a particularly beautiful efflorescence, in our societies of to-day.

Were Epictetus and Spinoza little people? you ask. Well, in their time they were failures as we moderns count success, and they liked a quiet life. Were they fools? They said they were, and thought it. Each of them would have told you that the only wisdom is to know one's ignorance.

They were little people and fools with that important difference.

Richard Whiteing's new book, which is about little people who are of no account, has the rare merit of letting us look at ourselves without too much uneasiness. And with that it is packed with the new ideas that are going to lift up our democracy. It will be read by many people who are not Socialists, and they will be drinking the sincere milk of the word at unawares. For instance, this occurs in a chapter on the folly of failure—just the kind of chapter to catch those people who go on blaming:

There is no rational relation between service and reward as things go, no approach to the finer doctrine that a man's best of social service, as the best he has to give, should be accounted to him for honour and profit in reasonable measure for all our needs. Our saviours, hereditary or other, charge too much: a successful genius fluttering his dividend warrants in our faces is a sorry sight. The surplus of faculty should be the possessor's own affair, a reason for deep thankfulness that he has it in him to do so much for so little, but not a thing to appraise in any values of glory or pelf.

For that matter, how are you going to appraise it? In mere millions, how much would be a living wage for a Leonidas or a Joan of Arc? It would be bad enough if we tried to reckon justly in that way, and to reward true service in equivalents of pounds, shillings, and pence. But think of the chaotic absurdity between Burns's bit of lean as gauger of Excise and some of the bits of fat in the Pension List of his day.

His day, observe. Whiteing knows very well that he might have written "our day" with the same justice, but he is for winning us converts at unawares. By all means. I do not care if they call themselves Tories—and see the point.

There is a tale for Tories called "The Changelings." They are sure to think it funny, and talk about it as if it were nothing more than that; but it is going to open some of their minds to the fact that a Duke brought up as a coster would be a coster. Breed has less to do with surface manners than they like to think. And there is a tale for the little people

who are cowed by conventions. A man who wanted to be thought mad, in order to go and see a friend wrongfully sent to an asylum, fails altogether till he hits upon the fact that, if you want all the world to think you mad, you have only to live according to reason. For example, he takes off his coat at a swagger dinner-party, being warm; and leaves the table when he has had enough; and proposes to read "Half Hours with the Best Authors" after dinner. When he comes to a climax by giving the largest wages to two old derelicts, on the principle "From each according to his powers; to each according to his needs," they think him as mad as a March hare, and have him promptly certified.

I am only afraid that some timid little people will take these things the wrong way. But one must risk that.

You cannot appeal to intelligence if there is none, and it is no use being a fool unless one knows it. I like the story of the Ragman coming away from the annual meeting of the Liberal and Radical Defence Association. Talking over the balance-sheet, the author said he had had no idea there was so much in hand. And the Ragman said:

"No more had nobody else: they've owned it at last."

"I don't exactly follow you—owned what?"

"That they've got some of our coin in their pockets. See what I mean?"

"Of course they have; but what of that?"

"What did I tell yer?"

"I don't know that you ever told me anything; but suppose you did."

"Well, yer see; they say so themselves."

With that there came into my mind the horrid suspicion that this was, perhaps, the first balance-sheet the Ragman had ever encountered in his life. I determined to put it to the test.

"Don't you understand the nature of a balance-sheet? It's part of the report."

"I never knowed nothing about it; did you?"

"Of course not."

"There y'are! Seems to me they've 'ad it all the time."

"Had what? Out with it!"

"Our 'a'pence."

"Why not?"

"Then why didn't they say so, eh? Couldn't put it off no longer; that's how it looks to me."

For any gentle soul like Richard Whiteing, there could have been nothing so easy to do as to leave the Ragman in disgust.

### THE LIGHT.

An idle poet here and there  
Looks round him; but, for all the rest,  
The world, unfathomably fair,  
Is duller than a witling's jest.

Love wakes men; once a life-time each  
They lift their heavy heads and look;  
And, lo, what one sweet page can teach  
They read with joy—then shut the book.

And some give thanks, and some blas-  
pheme,  
And most forget; but, either way,  
That, and the child's unheeded dream,  
Is all the light of all their day.

COVENTRY PATMORE.

Friendship has no doubt great advantages; you know a man so much better and can laugh at him so much more.—LADY ASHBURTON.

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Typist—"There! I knew I'd do it! Every time I clean this machine or change the ribbon I spoil a clean blouse. It'll take me an hour to scrub the smear out."

Anty Drudge—"Tut, tut! Don't be so foolish. Don't you know the easy way of washing? Get a cake of Fels-Naptha and follow directions, and after thirty minutes' soaking and a few rubs on the washboard, your blouse will be white as snow."

When you see the Fels-Naptha green-and-red wrapper at your grocer's, don't pass it with the thought that it simply contains a cake of laundry soap, but remember it also contains a better and easier way of washing—a way that makes the clothes cleaner and whiter and saves them. Buy it—and try it. If it is your first experience with Fels-Naptha soap you will hardly believe that a washing can be done so easily.

But it can be done—is done by more than a million women every week.

Why not let Fels-Naptha do it?

Fels = Naptha

will do it. Isn't it worth trying?

THE WOMAN WORKER.

DECEMBER 16, 1908.

The Last Word.

To-night (Wednesday), at The Pioneer 7.30, the Pioneers are meeting at the Food Reform Restaurant, Farnival Street, Holborn, to discuss plans for pushing our paper. This main business is to be tempered by music and refreshments, but it is the main business.

Therefore we have asked only those who are pledged to render systematic help, and I think all the tickets available have been distributed. If, however, any readers feel that they also would like to be enrolled as givers of regular aid, they might apply at once to Mr. Perry, 108, Storks Road, Bermondsey, and he will forward tickets of admission if any remain.

I am glad that the Married Women's Labour. Women's Labour League have decided to discuss the all-important question of married women's labour in connection with proposals for the endowment of motherhood at their annual Conference at Portsmouth in January. Although I recognise as fully as anyone the bad economic effect of married women's labour, I cannot feel that any proposal to entirely prohibit it by law is either practical or desirable.

In the case, however, of a prospective

mother—married or unmarried—the State is fully justified in refusing to allow her to engage in arduous labour for six months before and at least a year after the birth of a child. The mother, on her part, is clearly entitled to compensation for the loss of her employment, which should amount at least to the equivalent of her wages during the prohibited period.

State Starving of Mothers.

To-day the employment of women for four weeks after childbirth is rightly forbidden, but there is no provision for indemnity, and, as Dr. Eder has ably pointed out, the care of the State in this country seems thus limited to an attempt to starve the young mother at the time when she is most in need of nourishing food.

This leads, of course, to much evasion, as is vividly illustrated in the recent reports of the women factory inspectors.

Lessons from Abroad.

Here again we find that Continental nations are ahead of us. Under the German State insurance system mothers receive payment up to a period of six weeks after confinement. The amount is fixed according to the average wage of working women in each district in so far as it does not exceed three marks a day. The relief consists of the free services of a doctor and midwife, medicine, etc., and a cash payment not to exceed one-half the average wage. Thus the maximum amount received by any woman in cash is 9s. weekly. This is good as far as it goes, although one feels that at such times a woman requires more instead of less than her normal wages.

In Cologne and some other German cities, if the mother is obliged to go out to work for a living a daily grant is made to her on condition that she remain at home and suckle the child.

In France, Austria, and Hungary there are also various systems of maternity endowment. In some of the French municipalities widows and others with children absolutely dependent upon their earnings are paid a daily sum to remain at home and attend to their families.

Surely the time is ripe for experiment here!

A Ghastly Army.

I never go up Ludgate Hill without reluctance. From the Circus to St. Paul's the gutter is dotted with lost men and women whose faces of misery cannot be looked at without a shudder. They are sellers of shirt studs, of song-books, of toys, of the thousand things that in this wonderful world can be obtained at a penny apiece.

At Christmas time business is brisker than usual, and other men and women and children come out of the East to join the regular vendors. Then the Hill is appalling, for the line of wretchedness is unbroken and the faces seem more than ever cold and grey and lost.

The authorities apparently do not like it. This raggedness is not seemly in the main places of a wealthy city. Under the great dome of Wren it is a challenge at which our civilisation shivers. And our civilisation does not like to shiver. That is what it keeps the men and women in the gutter for.

Harried from the Hill.

So for the second year the gutter merchants are harried from the Hill. We read that many of them are stricken with despair. They point out that Holborn is already overcrowded, and they have been told that in any case they will not be allowed to traffic there. Farringdon Street, too, is to be forbidden.

They ask, plaintively, "Where must we go?"

The answer, not spoken, but implied, is the answer given from time immemorial to the appeal of wretchedness: "Go out of sight."

Sweating in Nottingham.

Miss Julia Varley, Organizer for the National Federation of Women Workers, is doing hard work in Nottingham just now, and, to judge by a letter which I have just received from a reader of THE WOMAN WORKER, she has not arrived too soon.

My correspondent sends me some interesting details as to the conditions of the blouse-making industry in Nottingham. In this, as in most sweated women's trades, absolute chaos seems to prevail.

One factory pays 3d. for making a plain shirt blouse, and from 6d. to 11d. for making a fancy lined blouse, according to the material used and the amount of work. Another factory pays 3d. for making a similar plain shirt blouse, and from 4d. for making a fancy-lined blouse. In Nottingham, too, as in other places, prices seem to be steadily falling. Last year 1s. 4d. was paid for making a fancy print dress, whereas this year the same garment with an additional belt has to be made for 1s.

A Week's Work and Wages.

My correspondent encloses two weekly statements of work done and wages earned by average work-girls for the week ending

November 21. Here is a week's work and wages of one of these girls:

Monday—A fancy net blouse with thirty tucks, 7d.

Tuesday—Fancy delaine blouse with elaborately-tucked vest, 9d.

Wednesday—Fancy net blouse elaborately trimmed; with insertion let in and tucks, 9d.

Thursday—Fancy net blouse elaborately trimmed, with insertion let in and tucks, 9d., stitching buttons on half-a-dozen blouses, 3d.

Friday—A plain print shirt, 3½d.

Saturday—Fancy net blouse with thirty tucks, 7d.

Total amount earned for the week, 3s. 11½d.

Another girl earned 6s. 3½d. during the week in question, which was, by the way, higher than her average wage. It was made up as follows:

Monday—Three plain print shirts, with cuffs and yokes lined, 8½d.

Tuesday—Three plain shirts lined throughout, 1s. 3d.

Wednesday—Three plain shirts lined throughout, 1s. 3d.; sewing buttons on half-a-dozen shirts, 3d.

Thursday—Three plain shirts lined throughout, 1s. 3d.

Friday—Four plain print shirts, 1s. 2d.

Saturday—One delaine blouse, 5d.

These are by no means exceptional cases. My correspondent adds that the earnings of many of these blouse makers range from 3s. to 5s. a week, out of which rail or tram fare has to be paid. Many of them live away from home and have to clothe and feed themselves.

The Price We Pay.

Even for girls living at home such low wages may mean death or worse. Recently an inquest was held at Hackney on a young girl aged 16, named Mabel Gilder. Her father stated in evidence that she had been working at a factory, and had earned from 2s. to 3s. a week. The coroner read a letter which he had received saying that the girl had to get up on bitterly cold mornings at half-past four o'clock, do washing, and clean doorsteps and windowsills before going to work.

Two of the dead girl's friends said that she had told them she was expected to take home 5s. each week, and that her step-mother complained if she failed to do this; and the forewoman of the factory stated that the girl's earnings were low because "this is not the season." She had cried and begged the forewoman to lend her some money, and seemed afraid to take home so little.

When the girl's body was recovered, 3s. 1d., her week's wages, was found in her pocket.

No conscience will be troubled, however, for an intelligent jury brought in a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane."

Aristocrats of the Kitchen.

Like most of our readers, I have been interested in the controversy on the Servant Question, introduced by Julia Dawson in these pages.

I thought of it a few days ago when an "Evening News" contents bill caught my eye. "Aristocrats in the Kitchen," said the poster. What could it mean? I hear from time to time from wealthy ladies of the impossibility of obtaining efficient domestic help. They must have abandoned the attempt, I said, and I imagined the Howards and the Cholmondeleys and the rest of them determining, at whatever inconvenience, to become womanly women—to undertake themselves the admittedly womanly work of scrubbing and sweeping.

Filled with anticipation I bought a paper. Alas! it was not so. The "Evening News" only meant that the L.C.C. is about to fill a number of vacancies as kitchenmaids on the staff of its asylums at wages ranging from £18 10s. to £26 10s. a year!

The Trade v. Carrie Nation.

The triumph of "the Trade" is not, after all, complete. The Licensing Bill, it is true, is dead, but now another enemy darkens the horizon.

Mrs. Carrie Nation is the new-comer, and she is very much alive—so "the Trade" is again apprehensive.

Mr. Bung, like the rest of us, lives in a glass house. He may be invulnerable in respect of his monopoly; he is by no means invulnerable in respect of his windows. And Mrs. Carrie Nation does not like windows—not, at any rate, if they belong to publicans.

Glass Conscious!

This antipathy developed early in life. Like another great American, she became possessed of a hatchet, and has since carried on a ruthless war against public-houses in the States, hitting, so to speak, whenever she saw a window. She has paid the penalty, of course, and has been many times fined and imprisoned.

But her gay spirit has been unquenchable, and upon liberation she has resumed her work with the old gusto.

Now, laden with laurels and bearing the proud title of the Champion Window Smasher, she comes to visit these shores. She has, indeed, already begun operations.

Depressed Spirits.

The hatchet is, for the moment, buried, and Mrs. Nation, with exemplary patience, is resolved to give her sinful brethren every opportunity for voluntary spiritual change.

So she has contented herself up to now with sudden entrances into bar parlours, general exhortations, snatching cigarettes from the lips of passers-by, and in similar preliminaries.

But the poor publican is not deceived by this mildness, and knows well enough that sooner or later the hatchet will begin its fell work.

Will the Lords again come to his aid? MARY R. MACARTHUR.

WOMEN DOCTORS PETITION.

Corresponding with Mr. Asquith, the women doctors have informed him that of the registered medical women in the kingdom 538 are in favour of the suffrage and only 15 against it. They add:

"In addition to being taxpayers, we are all graduates of universities or holders of diplomas of learned bodies; therefore possessing a double qualification for the exercise of the franchise.

"Members of the medical profession are called upon to perform services to their fellows of the most arduous, intimate, and responsible nature. In course of our work we come into contact with many classes of women, and we have special opportunities for realising the disabilities which attach to their lives through lack of effective representation.

"We claim for all women that the woman's point of view should be represented in the legislation of the country, and that medical women are specially qualified to assist."

THE VOTE IN THE STATES.

Live Agitation.

Though the new activity of the Suffrage movement in America is a response to Mrs. Humphry Ward's mistaken notion that it was dying out, its strength is found to be greater than its best friends knew.

The truth is that the American movement is just as old as the movement here, and just as much alive now.

The great and successful meeting in the Carnegie Hall will be followed up by a huge petition to Congress in February. This is said to have been started by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, the aged authoress of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic"; while it was Mrs. Borman Wells who founded the National Progressive Woman's Suffrage Union.

## OUR PRIZE PAGE.

## What Larks!

We are going to be frivolous for a change, if you please. After cloud comes sunlight; after bad times come good—at least so we should arrange our lives if we were wise. The letters below tell of trying times, therefore this week we will vary the entertainment by adding a spice of joy to it.

To be vulgar, we will have "larks"! At least you shall tell us of the jolliest time you ever spent, and after that the prize-winner shall spend the guinea rewarded on more "larks" an' she will—or he, for that matter. We are not prejudiced against our men folk; indeed, we rather like them, and wish them ever to share in the joys of life. That being so, we may hope for good reading; knowing as we do that fun and jokes are to men what the magnet is to steel.

These good times must not run to greater length than 200 words in the telling, also, copy being wanted earlier for Christmas week—or how are the printers to praise their wives' plum puddings?—all prize letters must be in by

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21,  
addressed to the Prize Editor, Utopia Press, 44, Worship Street, E.C.

## EMBARRASMENTS.

Nothing very startling in these, but some carry a laugh with them and should therefore receive kindly welcomes.

## THE PRIZE LETTER.

I was seventeen—a nursery governess in a rector's family. Oh, the austerity of that rector! He was only a small man, but to me his dignity made him tremendous. I would do anything, even to hiding behind doors, to avoid meeting him.

One evening, the children were in bed, the servants out, and the rector and his wife dining at a town ten miles distant. I had seen them off by train, and knew that nothing short of a small miracle could bring them back before eleven o'clock. What possessed me that night I know not. I was passing his dressing-room and caught sight of a new suit of clothes on a chair inside. In a moment I had divested myself of my own attire and was dressing in his!

I stood proudest in front of the glass, when suddenly my breath seemed to leave me. The miracle had happened! In the doorway stood—the rector!

I have a dim remembrance of seizing my clothes and dashing past him. I believe I shrieked. I know that early next morning a forlorn and frightened passenger appeared at the railway station, and the first train that passed through bore her back to her native town.—BERNARDINE.

## "In the Midst of Alarms."

The worst five minutes? Shall I ever forget them! I was dressing to go out one afternoon, when from the basement came a noise like the house-side falling in, mingled with shrieks from the maid and shouts from my father. Fear lent wings to my heels, and I rushed downstairs to see—what a sight! My father, purple-faced, hanging on to a huge cupboard (which by some strange accident had just lost a leg), wrestling with it like a horse with a furniture-van, and the maid with arms outstretched as though to embrace the universe, stars rolling at her vain endeavors to prop it up, while the thing at every moment slipped an inch further forward, its doors open like some gigantic mouth which vomited upon the Indian matting of my immaculate kitchen jars of jam, sugar, tin-tacks, tea, olive oil, flour, red and black ink, biscuits,

cookery books, a dictionary, salt, string, and pickled cabbage. Speechless, I gazed one moment; then, finding breath, asked, "Is anybody hurt?" "Hurt!" shouted my father: "yes, my trousers are hurt! They are all over ink and marmalade!" Y.B.—I did not go out that afternoon.—S. P., Leeds.

## Sugar.

Truly it was an awful moment! My maiden effort at pouring out tea for mine own true love!

I blushed! I shivered with apprehension. The waitresses grinned!

Round the sugar basin flew the tongs, trying to grasp the elusive pieces of adulteration. And still those waitresses smiled!

Still the sugar raced on!

At last! At last! Ah!—

Over went the basin, the sugar rattling sardonically, as I, in a feeble effort to stem the flood, caught a plate with my sleeve, the said plate squeaking derisively as it flew upon the downward path!

And mine own true love sat smiling, smiling!

But I—!—MARIE.

## My Terrible Five Minutes.

It happened on the Portsea pontoon, and was witnessed by a steam-launch full of people, and it is hard to say which sparkled most, the sunny sea or the eyes of those people.

I had just recovered from an attack of typhoid fever, which had robbed me of my "woman's glory." I had a horror of wigs, and a greater of looking conspicuous, so I conjured up my ingenuity, and out of my long locks made a fringe composed of short lengths of hair, sewed on to a piece of linen. This I fastened into my hat, then curled the hair nicely, and the effect was so satisfactory that I volunteered to take a "sea-trip" to Gosport!

On reaching the pontoon, the launch was about to start, so my sister exclaimed, "Run, Maud!"

I hurried forward—tripped, and down I went sprawling. Off came my hat, fringe upward—displaying a head that resembled a convict's! With bolting eyes I gazed wildly around. My sister laughed wickedly, away went the boat and those smiling faces, while I swallowed a big lump to keep back the angry tears, firmly refusing to take the sea voyage.—MAUD, Southsea.

## "Goodness Me! What was That?"

Silence and black darkness: the hour somewhere between one and two o'clock in the morning.

I lay with ears strained, and eyes that vainly tried to pierce the gloom.

The basket chair creaked!

A sympathetic response came from the opposite corner!

The door rattled softly.

Oh! for the power to put out my hand and boldly strike a match!

My eyes were the only part of me capable of movement, and my backbone was experiencing the "cold water sensation" in all its pleasing variety!

What was that stealthy creep—creep—creep, coming from the direction of the window?

It stopped—went on—stopped again. Then another period of waiting stillness followed.

Suddenly a heavy weight from somewhere out of the darkness landed full on my chest!

Where had it come from? What terrible shape was the night hiding from me?

I lay breathless for what seemed five hours, but was probably not five seconds; then, with a tremendous effort, I sat upright in bed, throwing off the weight with all my might.

A thud—a quick patter of feet—a black shape silhouetted for one moment against the window—and a long-drawn-out Me-e-a-ow!!! —MAY HARRIS, Bristol.

## A GRAVE ASYLUM SCANDAL.

Dear Madam.—During a four months' residence in a lunatic asylum I was afforded a unique opportunity of studying its internal workings. The patients are simply prisoners, leading the most desolate and unnatural life it is possible for human beings to live, and a life calculated to keep them and drive them more insane.

The law forbids the maltreatment and neglect of patients by employees in an asylum under liability of penalty and prosecution. (S. 99, Lunacy Act.) This law is kept more in the breach than in the observance.

No written complaints find their way outside, as the letters are all read by the doctor and posted at his pleasure, and I have gleaned that this intrusive rule is followed in all similar institutions. There is even a framed notice in the general waiting-room which says: "Visitors are particularly requested not to accept letters from patients either to post or deliver outside.—By order, A. Blank, M.D."

Yet it is specially enacted that letters between the Board and a patient in any asylum are to be forwarded unopened. (Ss. 15, 16, Lunacy Act, 1866.)

There is no classification. The mildest cases are placed amongst the wildest, and nervous, depressed, inoffensive creatures and old ladies, merely suffering from the forgetfulness of age, have to endure all the racket of those afflicted with the worst forms of dementia. From thirty to forty patients are confined within the four walls of one room.

The patients do the hardest and the heaviest work. An attendant never does any disagreeable duty she can bully a patient into doing, and it is firmly impressed upon the parish patients that work is compulsory because they are parish patients. They thus become valuable servants; and when, as in many cases, in the course of time reason asserts itself, applications for release are refused. There is a clause in lunacy law which says: "A parish patient cannot be discharged if the doctor represents him unfit." Observe "represents." He has not to prove it.

Some of the women work from 5 o'clock in the morning till 8 p.m. Fifteen hours, with meals snatched while at work, and 8 p.m. means bedtime. A maximum 105 hours a week, Sundays not being excepted.

Then the bulk of the household sewing is done by the patients, even the attendants' uniforms being made by them. One woman, a shirtmaker, quite sane, who entered the asylum through a nervous breakdown after a serious operation, has been daily making shirts for the male patients for nine years, and has every chance to be—

Sewing at once with a double thread  
A shroud as well as a shirt.

Some have been kept for 20, 30, 40, 50 years, and one male patient, who entered at the age of 22, has been an inmate for the long period of 65 years. On May 4, a woman, gentle, harmless, and bright-witted, died after 40 years' imprisonment, and her body was unclaimed.

The law as it stands does not protect those whom God hath afflicted; but there is the greater law of our common humanity, and if the brightest brains of the country can devise no certain cure for insanity, experiments can at least be made for the amelioration of this condition.

No need to petition the repeal of lunacy law. Investigation will bring confirmation; the avalanche of public opinion the repeal.

(Mrs.) MARY M. COULTS.  
103, Osborne Place, Aberdeen.

Police scandal the origin of the case.—M.M.C.

## A HAPPY SEASIDE HOME,

Together with a sound general education, including conversational French and German, offered to a few children under twelve. Closer care and more effective tuition for backward or delicate children than in large schools.

Home comforts and perfect family life. Plenty of outdoor exercise in a climate strongly recommended by doctors. Entire charge of children from abroad. Terms moderate. References to parents of former and present pupils; also to the "Clarion" Board.—Miss C. M. THOMPSON, Lightburne Avenue, St. Annes-on-Sea, near Blackpool.

## CRISP CORRESPONDENCE.

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

Readers who have anything to say to the writers of articles should, on the other hand, address them personally. They will encourage the writers and lighten the Editorial labours.

Letters are most likely to obtain publication when brief.

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

E. T.—We will try, but they are rarely available now. Many thanks for your help.

A. H. T.—Crowded out, alas! but useful for another occasion. Good of you.

UNA.—Coals of fire! It shall be used if possible. Too late this week.

## The Bread Committees.

Dear Miss Macarthur,—I should be very glad to help form a Bread Committee here, if others can be found to join.

The committee would, of course, collect 3d. weekly from subscribers, and pay bakers. The plan seems quite practicable. I am sure numbers will be very willing to join. We only want someone to lead.

The idea is worthy of Robert Blatchford, and that is high praise for any plan.

I think we might also give the bakers slips of paper, dated: "December 9. A cup of tea. Address — (between 9 and 10 o'clock)." I would give one every morning, so would my sister-in-law, and I should say many would.—Yours faithfully,

EDITH M. BAKER.  
2, Woodhouse Road, North Finchley, N.

Dear Miss Macarthur,—Here in King's Heath some of us are collecting money for a Bread Fund. May I say "Blessed be Winifrid"? Her article about the little grey-faced woman must have gone home.

How many of us would have had the pluck to do as she did? "Of such is the Kingdom," say I.—With every good wish,

ZOIDA BRADLEY.  
42, All Saints' Road, King's Heath.

## Hospital Nurses: A Scandal of

## Overwork.

Dear Miss Macarthur,—Knowing the interest you take in the woman worker, I was wondering if you would help to better the conditions of the nurse attendants at Hospital. I have a friend in there, and the poor girl is absolutely worn out.

They are on duty from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m., seven days a week, except that once in three weeks they get a Sunday off, and once a week from 2 till 10.30.

I will not go into detail here, but if you could call at the hospital and see my friend *incognito*, she could tell you more than I could; she will take you all over the asylum, and it may interest you.

My friend's name is —. The medical superintendent, —, seems to be an exceedingly nice man. At the annual ball he always speaks of his hard-worked nurses, and is very well liked. But I understand there is a matron who blocks any concessions, although the hospital is very richly endowed.

I would suggest, if it is within your province to take this up, that an open letter be addressed to him in THE WOMAN WORKER, and various suggestions for improving the lives of his nurses made. If this does not have the desired effect, then approach the Lunacy Commissioners.

I will undertake that every nurse has a copy of THE WOMAN WORKER. I submit a few improvements. Thanking you in advance, and apologising for troubling you,—I am, yours respectfully,

London, S.W.

## Suggestions.

There are many of the nurses who have no friends or relatives in London, and when they

have their day off they are obliged to stay in their bedrooms. Suggest, that the nurses have a general sitting-room.

Half-a-day a week is allowed, from 2 p.m. until 10.30, and once a month they are allowed a late key until 12 o'clock. Suggest, that when it is their half-day off they be allowed the late key to enable them to go to theatre, in addition to the one a month.

Each ward—which is, I should think, 56 yards long—has a rich Turkey carpet, which the nurse has to sweep by hand. This very nearly kills them. Suggest, that a man be told off to do such heavy work.

Each nurse has to do so much washing up, etc. Suggest, a work-maid in each ward.

Principally, suggest that the hours of labour be reduced.

## Comfort From Julia.

Dear Friend,—You cannot imagine how your "Answers to Correspondents" in THE WOMAN WORKER and the "Clarion" this week have relieved me, and also made me see that my husband was in the right when he said that first he must be sure of providing for us; and not take what I thought the only right way—proclaim himself "a true Socialist."

We have talked it over hours and hours, and in the end the only course he has seen clear was to go on quietly working as he has done for years. Now your advice has ended those discussions, and he will more happily continue his good work among all he comes in contact with, and be thought, as before, a very, very broad-minded Liberal.

I like your new page in THE WOMAN WORKER, and though I am not anything of a writer I have always been called a "queer un"—so who knows? Someday I might (?) champion some little cause!

It is hard to see that no result has come from your noble work to Daisy Lord. But surely it will have its good effect yet. Kindest thoughts!—Your CONSTANT READER.

Manchester.

## Healthy and Artistic Dress.

Dear Comrade Julia,—In the "Clarion" you lately mentioned the Healthy and Artistic Dress Union and the "Dress Review," but you omitted to give any address. Will you be so kind as to let me have this?

It is so difficult to make an ordinary dress-maker do anything that is not exactly "in the fashion." They never put comfort first.—Yours very sincerely,

E. PALMER.  
71, Adelaide Street, Norwich.  
[Can anyone supply this address?]

## Doing Without a Servant.

Dear Editor,—My sincere thanks to Dorothy Worrall for this week's Home Notes. I have so often been told that my views are "queer," "strange," "a century ahead of my time," and so on, that it is quite a surprise and a relief to find that another woman's coincide so exactly with my own.

Oh! for a four-roomed house, spacious and draught-proof, in which the walls are tiled and the floors polished, the windows stained and the heating apparatus electric, the cupboards and drawers fixtures, the furniture upholstered, and the tables marble-topped!

And oh! for the trampling down and stamping out of that insufferable snobbery which judges a man's worth by the number of rooms in his house and the amount of unhygienic lumber which he collects about him!

Which reflection brings me to "Working Wife's" letter. Certainly she has amply filled her part of the contract, but I am afraid that the evil is without remedy in such cases as hers.

I have solved the problem, but I have no children, and I admit that my method would hardly suit the mother of a large family. I do all my work myself, including the greater part of the washing. Collars and cuffs and such things as need much drying-room, e.g., sheets, I send to the laundry, and I have a man to clean the outside of the windows, because I cannot reach them. But this is the full extent of the paid help I receive.

Of course, my washing is limited to what is absolutely necessary. Sideboard cloths, table-centres, pillow-shams, bedspreads, gipsy-table covers, duchesse sets, doyleys, etc., are resolutely banished. And I am not one of the "shabby-genteel" class, who would not for worlds be seen cleaning their own doorsteps.

By these means, and by going to work in as scientific a manner as possible, I can keep the house healthy.

But do not imagine that I have time for other interests. Nothing of the kind. Housework is a monopolist; it is hard, dirty, monotonous, and purposeless, and the remedy is not to train girls to do it, still less to like it, but to render it unnecessary.—Yours faithfully,

SERVANTLESS.

## The Next Brick.

Dear Madam,—Julia Dawson sympathises with "Working Wife," sympathises with her maids, acknowledges that present conditions of home life are satisfactory to neither, and concludes that Socialism is the only remedy.

But if the Socialist State is not going to arrive, ready-made, like a fairy palace, at the wave of a magician's wand—if it is only coming, by building, with careful thought, on to present foundations—what we badly want to know is just how, in this matter of service in our homes, we are to set about putting on the next bricks.

We want to make it possible for "Working Wife" to do the work which she does now for the community without this harassing background of discordant aims and grudging service, and also to kindle in those who by their work liberate her for this wider usefulness a zest and pride in the honourable service that they, too, are rendering to the commonwealth. How is it to be done?

L. I. TRENCH.

Richmond Hill, Surrey.

## A Music Column.

My dear Miss Macarthur.—I want to remind you that we have not got a page for music yet. Why not a column after the style of the "Clarion"?

I am so sorry that Daisy Lord is not released yet. The time of waiting must be terrible for the poor girl.—Yours very sincerely,

(Mrs.) N. DE GROUCHY.  
Heathfield, Westridge Road, Southampton.

Dear Miss Macarthur.—May I make an appeal through your valuable paper to readers in South London on behalf of our Socialist Choir?

We are in need of more voices for all parts. We have an excellent conductor, and hope to do some useful work for the movement, the purpose for which we are formed. I feel sure there must be some readers on this side of London who would be glad to take part in a choir.

We meet at S.D.P. Rooms, 33, High Street, Peckham. Friends desirous of joining should apply for particulars to Mr. W. Andrews, 15, Clayton Road, Peckham.—Fraternally,

E. D. MORLING.  
247, Underhill Road, East Dulwich.

## Anarchy at the Albert Hall.

Madam,—Surely the wisdom of the W.S.P.U. has been proved up to the hilt by Mr. Lloyd George's "important statement"? It was nothing more or less than a deliberate insult flung in the faces of the women who demand the vote.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was put up by the Liberal Government to pacify the women Liberals, who were getting restless. His "important pronouncement" was but a repetition of Mr. Asquith's "promise," and in no wise a pledge given on behalf of the Cabinet.

It is well to remember that if it were not for the militant section of the woman Suffragists a meeting of the dimensions of that held at the Albert Hall would have been an impossibility. They—and they alone—have made "Votes for Women" a live question. Would that the men in the Socialist movement were blessed with one-half of their pluck! Then things would happen.—Yours sincerely,

JOHN CAWKER.  
2, Litchard Terrace, Bridgend, Glam.



## THE EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

Conducted by Pandora.

### JOURNALISM.—III.

Since my last article a correspondent has written asking me to tell her what kind of journalism is the "most profitable."

Undoubtedly, the sort of journalism that works in with the advertisements, the sort of gossip about dress, and bazaars, and weddings, and shops, and the like, with mention of the names of various firms. There is a large demand for this kind of thing.

The well-known girl's gossip in "Truth" is an example of it. This is quite readable, and though this style of thing panders to extravagance and silliness, it is not harmful in the way that scandal and innuendo are.

Of this type of journalism beware. Do not stab in the dark or hint at things that may pain possibly innocent people, even for the sum of one guinea. The harmless gossip retailer must be willing to do anything that comes in her way, whether it is to describe a sanitary reform meeting or a wedding breakfast. Indeed, for our purpose, both functions can be treated in much the same way. Readers will want to know what sort of persons attended the sanitary reform meeting, what any prominent ladies wore, with a little sprinkle of the serious part of the affair.

All this sort of gossip-journalism is wholly upon the surface, but until you have better, or at least regular, work, you must practise it.

#### Qualifications for the Paragraphist.

You had better put all your descriptions in the form of notes, and the qualifications of a paragraph writer are a good memory for faces and names, a quick eye to distinguish faces, a ready facility with your pen—which comes with practice—the capacity of never being tired, and, along with quickness, accuracy.

If you can take in the details of a dress at a glance—and most women can—if you can draw up a readable report of proceedings, you will do for this kind of work. Interviewing is nothing much more than a combination of these functions.

You must also dress smartly, or no editor will send you out to "write up" shops, weddings, at homes, and the like.

At first, of course, you will not be attached to any newspaper, and this gives you the chance of sending any news or reports round to several papers. But you must note there is a difference between an article which you write exclusively for one paper and are paid accordingly, and news which a dozen papers will accept, each paying.

#### Numerous Other Branches;

and whilst you are getting practice and keeping the pot boiling, it is an admirable plan to specialise.

What is your hobby? Gardening, photography, needlework, cookery? Which ever it be, make it your business to inform yourself as thoroughly as possible

upon the theory, and seize every opportunity for practical experience.

For instance, if you can design a little, and know something of needlework, you will find this a really lucrative field, and it is not overcrowded, as are those of the fashions and literature. The designing need only be of the simplest kind, just enough to show the reader what you mean.

Practical dressmaking is another good subject. A little while ago the editor of a woman's paper asked me to find a lady who could teach simple dressmaking by the help of diagrams, offering £3 a week for 2,000 words, but she had to give proof of her capacity to a dressmaking expert—and I could not find anyone suitable.

Upon some future occasion I will have a special paper on story-telling for the Press.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OPENINGS FOR TEACHERS OF DRESSMAKING, ETC. (F. E. R., Portsmouth).—If you will send your name and address, I shall be happy to give you any information I can on the subject of your inquiry.

DRESS FOR THE WOMAN WORKER (WEE).—I am delighted to hear you like this column. Please make it known among your friends. We want all who work for their living to read it. Yes, I like the "pinafore" style of dress very much, and generally wear it for working purposes.

HOLIDAY GUEST IN WEST (M. E. C.).—I have forwarded your letter to Mrs. L., who was anxious to get a congenial spirit to spend the Christmas holidays with her.

WHERE TO TRAIN AS A DOMESTIC WORKER (SENSIBLE).—I think you justify your pseudonym by your choice of work. You say you love household work, and you like to feel you are in a home and are adding to the happiness of the inmates. I strongly advise you to get trained at the Sesame House, 45a, Acacia Road, St. John's Wood, N.W., or the Guild of Household Dames, Lansdown Crescent, Cheltenham. Training adds so greatly to the status of the worker; the Sairey Gamps became extinct when the trained nurse appeared. You will never have any difficulty in getting work, and I feel quite sure that before very long there will be readjustment in domestic service, and we shall have regular hours, and a right relation between employer and employee.

APPOINTMENT OF FACTORY INSPECTOR (FACTORY).—It is quite impossible to guarantee an answer in this column by any date. I should say your chance of getting a post as factory inspector is very slight unless you have influence, or have done some work which has attracted notice. These posts are most coveted, and as there are very few of them, there is great competition. The Home Office appoints these inspectors, who have to pass a Government examination. It is an advantage to have passed the Sanitary Inspectors' examination. Apply for all particulars to Sanitary Institute, Parkes Museum, Margaret Street, London.

[Remainder of Answers next week. Pandora begs to inform her correspondents that owing to the pressure on space it is impossible to print an answer by any given date.]

In the draft charter of the new Bristol University it is laid down that women shall be eligible for any office in the University and for membership of any of its constituent bodies, and that all degrees and courses of study in the University shall be open to them.

### MRS. JORDAN.

There was one comic actress who was Nature herself in one of her most genial forms. This was Mrs. Jordan; who, though she was neither beautiful nor handsome, nor even pretty, nor accomplished, nor "a lady," nor anything conventional or *comme il faut*, yet was so pleasant, so cordial, so natural, so full of spirits, so healthily constituted in mind and body, had such a shapely leg withal, so charming a voice, and such a happy and happy-making expression of countenance, that she appeared something superior to all those requirements of acceptability, and to hold a patent from Nature herself for our delight and good opinion.

Mrs. Jordan was inimitable in exemplifying the consequences of too much restraint in ill-educated country girls, in romps, in hoydens, and in wards on whom the mercenary have designs. She wore a bib and tucker and pinafore, with a bouncing propriety, fit to make the boldest spectator alarmed at the idea of bringing such a household responsibility on his shoulders. To see her when thus attired shed blubbling tears for some disappointment, and eat all the while a great thick slice of bread-and-butter, weeping, and moaning, and munching, and eyeing at every bite the part she meant to bite next, was a lesson against will and appetite worth a hundred sermons.

The way in which she would take a friend by the cheek and kiss her, or make up a quarrel with a lover, or coax a guardian into good humour, or sing (without accompaniment) the song of "Since then I'm doomed," or "In the dead of the night," trusting, as she had a right to do, and as the house wished her to do, to the sole effect of her sweet mellow and loving voice—the reader will pardon me, but tears of pleasure and regret come into my eyes at the recollection as if she personified whatsoever was happy at that period of life, and which has gone like herself.

The very sound of the little familiar word *but* from her lips (the abbreviation of husband), as she packed it closer, as it were, in the utterance, and pouted it up with fondness in the man's face, taking him at the same time by the chin, was a whole concentrated world of the power of loving.

LEIGH HUNT.

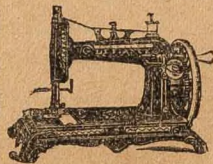
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## HOME NOTES.

By Dorothy Worrall.

Good gracious! Just as I thought we were going on splendidly, Mary Macarthur brings mother a letter from somebody who says THE WOMAN WORKER is dull. "Please be more cheerful," she says, and signs herself "A Friend."

That very day Mary had lunch with us, and though I made two scrumptious WOMAN WORKER dishes, I do not believe she even knew what she was eating. She was thinking about that letter, eating it perhaps and digesting badly.

**But If We Are Dull,** it is good that at least our friend is honest enough to tell us so. I wish all the rest who think it would have the courage. Well, if I am dull, I cannot help it, for I have been making dressing jackets for Christmas. Stitch, stitch, stitch, and I would rather cook, read, rub, scrub, do any mortal thing than sew, except go to bed when I am not sleepy.

There are plenty of girls who hate sewing just as much as I do. It is not that we are lazy, but we have an inborn grudge against it.

For at school we had to sew while the boys played, and it is just the same at home in many cases. There is always mending to take up the girl's spare time, while her luckier brother goes off to play "football." It is not at all fair, but perhaps things will be better arranged when women come into their own.

How would it be to bring in a Bill to make men mend their own socks? I feel sure that if this came to pass we should not see the big holes where the heels ought to be when we look at the pile in the mending basket. How do they manage to get such big holes in their socks? Perhaps they think that small ones are not worth the trouble of darning, and so the poor dears inconvenience themselves for our sakes.

Oh, brothers and husbands, pray do not make martyrs of yourselves any longer! If there be ever such a tiny hole we shall be profoundly grateful if you will

**Change Your Socks.** This naturally brings up the question as to which is the easiest and best way of darning stockings. One friend of mine hardly ever darns hers. She refoots them when the holes get at all numerous. It is quite easily done by cutting off the worn part and making new feet out of the legs of old stockings. In most bought stockings there is a seam round the foot; this will show you where to cut it.

Now can you tell me some good methods of mending? Stockings are not the only things that will come into holes. Would that they were! I have an umbrella that has two long slits in it. Can anyone tell me how to mend that?

And now I am going to

**Crumble a Bit.** I love to get your letters, and look with delight at the ever-increasing bundle that waits for me on the breakfast-table. But when I open one after another and find nothing but recipes, recipes, I really do feel disappointed. Send as many recipes as you like, but do tell me of other things as well. We have souls as well as bodies.

### General Recipes.

This is a really good and nutritious supper dish:

POTATO PIE.—2lb potatoes, 2 onions, 1oz butter, ½oz tapioca which has been steeped in cold water for a quarter of an hour, pastry. Pare and cut the potatoes, put in a pie-dish, adding sliced onions, tapioca, butter cut into bits, and seasoning. A few herbs may also be added. Cover with paste and bake in a moderately hot oven. If liked, hard boiled eggs can be substituted for the tapioca.—Dorothy.

No. 19 has obtained the most votes, so the 5s. prize goes to Mrs. E. Murgatroyd, 5, Barton Mount, Beeston Hill, Leeds, for her Date Pudding recipe. Please vote for the number of the recipe you like best out of the following:

CURE FOR COLD.—Take ¼ teaspoonful pure vaseline night and morning. It is specially prepared for internal use, and is not horrid to take.—34.

A CURE FOR HOARSENESS.—Horseradish, which is generally only looked on as an accompaniment to roast beef, is valuable as a cure for hoarseness. Scrape two drams of the root, cover with boiling water, and infuse with an equal weight of brown sugar. Let it stand a few hours, then take an occasional teaspoonful, which will cure the most obstinate hoarseness. The root scraped and applied on a rheumatic joint eases the pain.—35.

GARGLE FOR A SORE THROAT.—Pour half a tumblerful of warm water over two tablespoonfuls of honey. Stir until the honey is quite dissolved. Add to this one wineglassful of vinegar. Stand aside until cold. Use frequently.—36.

TO CURE A COUGH.—An excellent remedy for a cough is made by boiling 1oz of flax seed in a teacupful of water. Strain and add 1oz of rock candy, a tablespoonful of honey, and the juice of three lemons. Boil well. Drink as hot as possible.—37.

CURE FOR WHOOPING COUGH (For outward application only).—Two pennyworth oil of cloves, two pennyworth oil of amber, two pennyworth camphorated oil. Mix all together and rub into the back and chest at night before the fire before putting to bed. Especially rub well up the spine. I have used these for one of my children, and found it give almost immediate relief. Another very good recipe to be taken: Take one moderate sized new-laid egg, put into a jar, pour over one gill of acetic vinegar (from the chemist's), cover over, and in about 48 hours the vinegar will dissolve the egg, shell and all. When dissolved, beat up and add two pennyworth of honey, and beat all together. Dose: one teaspoonful when the fits of coughing come on. (The egg must be completely dissolved).—38.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS. Mrs. ROBERTS.—Glad you liked the Christmas pudding recipe. I shall be giving cake and icing recipes shortly.

A. L. GARDNER.—Unfortunately, she to whom you would give the prize is not able to take it, as I am that unlucky person. Only vote for the recipes that have a number at the end. I do not remember having a letter from you before. What did you want to know? Pray ask now, as I am only too pleased to answer questions if I can.

E. WOLSTENCROFT AND OTHERS.—Please do not expect me to insert all the recipes that I get. I should more than fill THE WOMAN WORKER every week if I did that.

MISS MAYO.—Thank you for your kind letter. I have passed it on to Mother, as she will be able to tell you all about the Handicraft Guilds. I am sure you will get a much nicer dresser from one of the Guilds than if you bought it in the ordinary way. Will it not be fine when hand-made furniture is an ordinary thing to buy, and machine-made stuff extraordinary?

Mrs. GILBERT.—Take the chestnuts out of the water before you put them in the oven,

then the skins will peel off quite easily. Thank you for your appreciation of the "Home Notes" page.

QUEENIE PALMER.—Several readers want to know when to put the egg in your tomato paste recipe. Will you please let me know?

K. E. BUTTON.—You will see that I am asking about the tomato paste recipe. Yes, send in as many recipes as you like. The more the merrier.

ALPHA.—Do the wet plate to make the dough rise quicker. Mrs. Hopwood says: "Plunge the plate under the cold water, drain a little; then place it on the dough." Will you let me know if this proves successful? My grandmother tried it, and could not find that it made any difference, therefore I shall be particularly interested to know the result of your experiment.

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

### Arrest For Rates in a Workhouse.

A committee of the Lambeth Borough Council is trying to find out how it happened that a poor man in Lambeth Workhouse Infirmary was arrested there for non-payment of rates. Though ill, he was taken out and haled before the magistrates, who committed him to Brixton Prison for seven days!

The good woman doth not say, "Will you have this?" but gives it you.—Italian proverb.

## Pyjamas

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## THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

## Chat With a Christmas Goose.

"Goose! You say that every week!" So spake a very disrespectful young person in reply to my doleful, "I really do not know what to say to my children this week."

And the very unflattering title bestowed upon me set me wondering why the goose should always be singled out as being particularly stupid.

## A Rum-Antic Story.

In an old book, which was a favourite of my childhood, I find:

"Dogs and cats, squirrels and rabbits, geese and ducks, though they do not get hold of much knowledge as we have, generally use what little they do get and make the most of it. When they have learned a good lesson they remember it. I knew a whole flock of geese once who got as drunk as fools, eating cherries that had been soaked in rum. But nobody could make a single goose of that flock eat such things after. They had been drunk once. That was sufficient for them. What a pity that all the members of the human family do not profit by what they learn, as did these geese!"

That was written, my dears, not only "long before your time," but even before Peg arrived on this very interesting, if somewhat bewildering, planet. And human beings have not yet attained to the wisdom of geese. Ah! if but one lesson were enough for us, my dears. Then might parsons cease from troubling and policemen be at rest.

## Sage Reflections.

Your Peg must confess that she has had some of her lessons over and over again, and has not yet fully profited by them—and is therefore unworthy of the name of "goose." Yet, willing as I am to admit the superiority of the goose, I feel myself going all over "goose-flesh" at the idea of being one at this season.

I find this world, as I have said, though certainly bewildering, very interesting, and I am in no haste to depart. And were I suddenly transformed to a goose, yet retaining the knowledge I now have, instead of polishing up the "gay and festive" smile—which has been mislaid for some time—and trying to invent, or evolve, or discover some new way of saying "I wish you a Merry Christmas!"—I should be going around quavering dejectedly. "Brief life is here our portion!" and considering in very bad taste any conversational allusions to sage and onions.

## Stuffing.

The writer of the extract I have given uses the goose to "point a moral" which is quite all right up to his point. But, going further, and considering the fate of the shining example, the moral seems rather topsy-turvy.

Repeated lessons, ere heads—  
Or profits—human sinner;  
The goose, we're told, requires but one,  
Which sure should saintship win her.  
Yet—the sinner feasts at Christmastide,  
And the saint, dears—is the dinner!

However, the goose has the "reward of virtue" during her lifetime, in freedom from the pain and trouble oft-repeated

foolishness brings. And "goodness," which is only practised for the sake of reward, here or hereafter, is not good for much, my dears.

## A Goose With a Grievance.

So the label "stupid" is a stupid libel on a creature which can be used as an example of wisdom to us.

And, as I take always the side of the Bottom Dog, and the Turning Worm, and the Goose with a Grievance, I wish here to contradict an often-repeated misleading statement—on the authority of a highly intelligent goose, whom I met on the Common, the day of my interview with Arachne, the Spider.

She—the goose—was one of a long procession straggling along in somewhat disorderly order, craning long necks from side to side in inquiring fashion. As they drew near, Lulu began to sing softly, "Goosie, goosie gander," and to the goose of most amiable appearance I addressed myself.

"Excuse me," I said politely, "but may I ask if the 'goosie, goosie gander' story is true? And if so, after having been shown so forcibly the error of his ways, did the 'old man' pray without ceasing?"

"H'm!" said the goose, scornfully, "another of you! You humans always throw in our faces that stupid old throwing downstairs story. All the children sing 'Whither do you wander?' as if that were their business, and then give themselves the idiotic answer. Now—just look at us. Are we so constructed as to be able to take man, by the left or any other leg, and throw him downstairs? And why should omission to say prayers annoy us? Such foolishness as throwing downstairs for not saying prayers has certainly never occurred amongst feathered geese."

"H'm!" said the goose, scornfully, "another of you! You humans always throw in our faces that stupid old throwing downstairs story. All the children sing 'Whither do you wander?' as if that were their business, and then give themselves the idiotic answer. Now—just look at us. Are we so constructed as to be able to take man, by the left or any other leg, and throw him downstairs? And why should omission to say prayers annoy us? Such foolishness as throwing downstairs for not saying prayers has certainly never occurred amongst feathered geese."

## The Bad Old Times.

I did not like the way in which she said "feathered." I wondered if she knew something of our history.

For, as you will have read, my dears, for many centuries human beings inflicted far worse things than throwing downstairs on those who would not say prayers, and also on many who did pray, long and fervently, but not quite in the fashion approved by their persecutors. Some of the blackest blots on the pages of history have been caused by the determination of one set of people to decide for another set how they should pray.

And here you may say, "Oh, but those times are over now. We have no Spanish Inquisition, no Massacre of St. Bartholomew, no fires of Smithfield to-day." And I am glad to know it is true, dears, that the race has awakened from the awful nightmare of superstition and fear which made possible such cruelty and barbarism. But—we still occasionally throw downstairs, in different fashion, those who will not say prayers, or who do not pray in the most generally approved manner. And there are to-day women thrown roughly downstairs into prison because they will say prayers, and say them loudly in public places.

Dear! dear! Would you have believed that we could fly quite so far away from where we started, on the outspread wings of a goose?

## Cacklers.

Well—I assured my goose that I was convinced that the ancient rhyme was a libel on her race, and she became quite conversational.

I was reminded—as I expected to be—of the geese who saved Rome from destruction.

There were, as you may remember, a flock of them outside the city walls, and they cackled so loudly and long on the approach of the enemy, intending a night surprise attack, as to alarm in time the sentinels within. But I could not think Mother Goose so very stupid for what is quite a human weakness. Many of us think ourselves important persons because of the history-recorded cackling and clattering of some long-dead ancestor, who often did not serve his country half so well as did the geese of Rome.

## Eggs-citement.

My goose was somewhat annoyed because I did not share her opinion that the goose who laid the golden eggs was what is called "mythical" by learned professors—who write books proving that nothing ever happened and nobody ever existed.

But are we not continually being told in the papers, when somebody prays too loudly for bread, or work, or higher wages, or shorter hours, that "we shall kill the goose which lays the golden eggs"? And is there not a most confusing cackling and clattering going on to-day among human geese, all claiming to be the layers of golden eggs—even those who do nothing but collect them?

Here are the wings of my goose taking me on another queer flight. And I have not space for all the interesting things I learnt from her, in gratitude for which I revised the nursery rhyme that had so ruffled her feathers:

## Sauce.

Goosie, goosie gander,  
The story is but slander  
That you "upstairs and downstairs"  
Did stupidly meander.

And though a man you might think strange,  
Who "wouldn't say his prayers,"  
You'd never dream his heart to change  
By throwing him downstairs.

The geese who strive to make me good,  
By whips and gyves and tethers—  
I will not say quite all I could,  
But—they're not garbed in feathers.

Oh, had but Love her wisdom lent,  
Swift should we understand,  
More power than grip of punishment  
Hath clasp of friendly hand.

I wish here to thank those who have kindly written confirming the genuineness of Nellie Normington's poem—which I never doubted. Nellie is happy in loyal friends.

Next competition subject, "New Year Resolutions." Not more than 250 words. Age limit 14. Time up to December 23. Prize a 5s. book. Peg.

Can that man be dead  
Whose spiritual influence is upon his kind?  
He lives in glory; and such speaking dust  
Has more of life than half its breathing moulds.

L. E. LANDON.

## Talks with the Doctor.

## WINTER COLDS.

Perhaps I may be forgiven for a few more words of advice on the common cold.

A widespread opinion prevails that your ordinary doctor cannot grapple with this ordinary ailment. And the doctor knows that it is chiefly the most flagrant neglect of commonplace hygienic counsels on the part of patients that makes the cold so troublesome.

To avoid catching a cold, when it is "about," is difficult. But when it is caught, treatment makes all the difference.

The first essential in the treatment is rest, either absolute or partial. Comfortable rest in bed, with frequent glasses of milk, cups of soup, and light meals is more than any cold can stand. Combine this with a warm bath in the same room, or very near it, a mild laxative and a mild fever mixture to promote sweating, and the cold hides its diminished head.

In theory a Turkish bath is excellent. In practice, when in 999 cases out of 1,000 such a bath has to be taken away from home, it does harm because of the chill induced after the bath.

If so complete a rest cannot be taken, then the greater the amount of rest taken the better. Rest is necessary, because it enables the energies of the body to concentrate on the work of repelling the catarrh.

There is one very simple hygienic precaution usually neglected, and that is adequate clothing.

This neglect is seen in its most extreme form in the case of children, who are frequently clothed thickly and tightly round the chest, and have no clothes at all on stomach and legs except loose-flapping petticoats. And mothers wonder how it is that their children are always having bronchitis. Chilling of the legs and abdomen is quite as bad for the chest as chilling of the chest, and quite as likely to start a "cold."

In adults it is just the same. Many men and women have the body very unevenly clothed, the legs being often the portion of the body chosen for a chilly lack of suitable garments. A very good case can be made out for going without garments altogether, but if in an imperfect world such things are necessary, we should at least see to it that the body is clothed equally all over.

Another very unhygienic habit is that of living in rooms with fires and shut windows in cold weather. Open windows and fresh air are more necessary in cold than in warm weather.

Smoking and alcohol consuming are also likely to bring colds in their train. The steady "temperate drinker," who takes a good deal but never gets drunk, is generally very liable to colds.

In fact, ladies and gentlemen, in order to avoid colds we must all be perfect beings in a perfect world. But there is such a thing as individual approximation to an ideal of health, managed in such a way as to correct our most pronounced tendencies to ill-health.

That is the only way to avoid colds (relatively)—while the way of cure is by rest.

X. Y. Z.

(Answers next week.)

## Complaints and the Law.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

STEELE (Preston).—The fact that you went to see the Secretary in the first place about compensation would be held, I think, in view of the cases quoted before, to be sufficient proof that you made a claim originally. No second claim was necessary. But it looks as if there must be some other difficulty. Otherwise, I do not see why they deny their liability. It may be that the insurance company does not admit that the present state of your eye is due to the accident. Unfortunately, I do not know of any firm of lawyers to refer you to. As you are now working, you will, in any case, only be able to get an award for some nominal sum (say a penny a week) which will enable you to keep your claim open. But this is, of course, important, as your eye is likely to trouble you again in the future. The receipt of the £10 will not prejudice your claim, but it might be set off against the arrears of compensation due for the weeks you were unable to work (i.e., half wages each week, except the first fortnight).

H. M. C.—If the husband is now domiciled in England, the English courts will have jurisdiction, and the wife will doubtless have to come to England to give evidence in court. But the English courts will not deal with the case if the domicile is French, and the proceedings will have to be taken in France. If the case is taken in the English courts, doubtless an order will be made requiring the husband to contribute to the maintenance of the children.

FRATERNAL.—Mrs. A. is entitled to stand in the place of her father, and share equally with her uncles and aunts. The person who took out letters of administration and arranged about the distribution of the money is personally liable to pay her her share, even though the uncles and aunts will not refund. It would be best to write to the administrator and the uncles and aunts in the first place. If they will not settle the matter satisfactorily, it will be necessary to have a solicitor and take proceedings in the High Court. The four illegitimate children are not entitled to anything.

A. W. (Stockport).—Unfortunately, bronzing is not scheduled under the Workmen's Compensation Act, so that the girl has no claim. If you will please send the name and address of the firm, I will report it to the inspectors, in the hope that some improvements may be introduced to the benefit of the girls still employed there. It is a most distressing case; all the more so because bronzing is quite an unnecessary process.

F. P. (Walkley).—If you have an interest in the estate, the trustees are bound to give all reasonable information. If they refuse, you had better consult a solicitor. It would be well first to see the will, if you have not already done so, so as to make sure what your interest is. You can see it at Somerset House, or get a copy for a small sum.

GLASVEGHAN.—The error having arisen merely from a mistake, it does not affect the validity of the marriage. The only danger is that if it were necessary at any time for J. J. W. to prove his identity, difficulties might arise. The same applies to the mistake in the registration of the son's birth.

ARISTOPHANES.—If it is customary for the employers to hold over the wages due for an unfinished piece till the following week, I do not see any remedy but trade union agitation. I hope the women are organised. People who are dismissed should certainly receive the wages due for all work actually done.

PORTIA.

## "The Woman Worker."

THE WOMAN WORKER has come to spread the religion of humanity. It was born to teach us how to live.

No one need be lonely who reads it. Its writers are known as comrades.

May it have a long life!

SARAH ROBINSON-POULTON.

Dear Julia Dawson.—THE WOMAN WORKER is food to me. I would as lief go without my dinner as THE WOMAN WORKER.—Yours sincerely,  
M. E. HEBB.

Keyworth, Notts.

## Julia Dawson's Answers.

C. BLYTHE.—How splendid of you to gradually collect a little library like that! The letter from your aunt, who is sixty, has been a domestic servant all her life, and in her present place in the States for eighteen years, is most interesting. I can quite imagine that she would not agree with Bessie Smallwood who belongs to a later generation. "I think any servant who respects herself would scorn the idea of being put on a level with her mistress," is very Early Victorian. But there is more in it than meets the eye. There is many a refined and cultured servant nowadays whose dignity would be righteously offended if someone sought to put her on a level with her rich and vulgar mistress. I have no doubt your aunt is right that servants in the States are similar to servants in England, and that "help" is merely another name. Since you send her THE WOMAN WORKER, perhaps she will pass along some other American news of interest to women.

CLARA B.—If so many publishers have refused your story, I hardly like to recommend you to still continue the expense of sending it round, and to run the risk of its loss. Plain, unvarnished truth, without any "dressing," is often so deadly dull to read that practically all successful novels are built upon imagination pure and simple. If you care to send the MS. to me I will give you my opinion, just to show that if it is possible to help you I wish to do so. But as a literary critic, candidly, that opinion is not worth much.

H. S.—Girls and boys must have passed a certain standard before they can be kept from school when under twelve, for any reason whatsoever. It is hard sometimes on the parents. But taking it all round, the rule is a good one. Used your shilling for my "Clarion" Brown Book. Thanks.

A. MERREMAN.—The report is probably correct. Mussels do contain a poison which is dangerous.

A. L. E.—Good, but why not suggest the idea of publishing as a pamphlet the "Daily Mail" columns on Socialism to the "Daily Mail"? It is not generally slow to catch on to what promises to be profitable. Also, why do you not tackle the Labour Party when it is not active enough to please you? I agree with you that there is, notwithstanding some failures, still a crying need for somebody to carry out a scheme of carrying cooked meals round to homes. You have the pencil of a ready writer.

J. SEED.—Passed your letter on to Keighley Snowden.

A. J. M. (Withington).—Thanks for your grateful and comforting letters. I wish all Manchester readers could afford to take their wives and children to the Clarion Café for every meal every day. Would not that save a lot of unnecessary work?

LORNA.—Yes, I think we dare. Will see later.

SISSIE FENTON.—You are a loving, loyal brick.

E. H. (Southport).—So sweet of you to send your old stock to the hungry and needy, instead of selling it off cheap, which I can quite understand does not "pay" from a trade point of view. I wish all other shopkeepers would go and do likewise. The things have been given to the Liverpool Clarion Soup Van crusade.

C. F. R.—I am not a member of the Civic Guild of Help. But I do agree with you that if, before it gives help, it requires poor folk to answer two sheets of foolscap of questions, or even one sheet, it does not live exactly up the right street to help the respectable and self-respecting poor.

M. W. GASKELL.—I quite expect it is true that the Old Age Pension people will require a penniless old woman to produce a birth certificate at a cost of 3s. 6d. Seems to me they will do anything but grant a pension where one is due. A Socialist investigator, whose duty it was to go round to old folk who had sent in claims, told us that he could swear at what he had to do to satisfy the demands of his employers. Men and women with no income at all are deprived of their pensions if it can be proved that they receive voluntary assistance from friends and relations enough to keep them in decency, even though that assistance is often given where it can ill be afforded. Let me know.  
(See next page.)

**POLICEMEN AS COUNCILLORS.**—An ex-sergeant of police who is drawing a pension is, I am told, on the Barrow County Council. The point was raised, and decided upon as legal.

**C. F. B.**—You are an old dear to begin your letter "Here's for your head!" But not quite so dear when you suggest that since I cannot find for you a young woman to do housework and washing for half-a-crown a week, all that we write in the "Clarion" and THE WOMAN WORKER about poverty and unemployment is a sham. Nobody who "shams" anything has ever written one line for either of those papers, and nobody who "shams" buys them, because they would not find anything in them to their liking. There is one, and perhaps only one, profession for women in which the demand is greater than the supply, and it is that profession which includes housework and washing. A girl of 18 who can do this can earn more than twice the sum you offer easily, so you must not blame me really for not being able to meet your need.

**EDITH DODD.**—It was very good indeed of you to send that clothing. But another time will you please ask me for a name and address instead of sending the parcel to me direct? When I said that to start taking in THE WOMAN WORKER was the best thing you had ever done, I meant no reflection on the dear old "Clarion," of course. It is better to take in two good papers than one, is it not?

**SOPHIA HORSFALL.**—Your suggestion that Ethel Carnie should compose a four-line "Grace before meat" to sing at Socialist guest tables is a good one. As she is a constant reader of THE WOMAN WORKER, she may take this as an instruction.

**NORMA.**—You did quite right to complain re lack of fire in your workroom, and I have reported it. Let me know what happens. What a horrible, dirty hole to work in! I hate to think of young girls in places like that. Why do you not try some other work?

**How to FURNISH on £30.**—An engaged man asks how to furnish a small "parlour" house for £30. Plain, simple things. Will readers send along suggestions, not necessarily a complete scheme, but bit by bit, here a chair, there a table, etc., as they have bought?

**N. W. DOMESTIC.**—Very sorry, my friend, but your poetry will not do.

**H. F. B.**—Sorry, but I could not be responsible for the payment of the goods, and so have destroyed your letter.

**L. T. P.**—The Secretary of the Anti-Sweating League, J. J. Mallon, would give you information. A letter addressed to him, c/o THE WOMAN WORKER Office, would be forwarded. Fancy having to deal with sweating evils in delightful Dartmouth!

**VACCINATION IN SCOTLAND.**—A correspondent says this is not compulsory. All that is necessary is to apply for an exemption certificate when registering the child. If already registered, this application must be made within four months of birth. When the form is filled in, it must be signed by a J.P. There is no cost attached.

**MIM.**—Men are funny when they put on superior airs and pretend to know better than we do how to run a house, are they not? Certainly, your friend could not brag much if a woman had cleaned out his offices for forty years, and never had an aspiration beyond such drudgery.

**J. AND W.S.**—Your husband and self both want work, and have been trying for it over a year, sometimes spending 3s. a week in postage stamps. He is 32, and you, I presume, about 30. He was in business for himself, but failed, and spent all his savings in paying debts, so that he owed no man anything. You are a schoolmistress, but as married teachers are debarred further employment, you have been obliged to give up the post you held temporarily. You are both vegetarians, abstainers, steady and conscientious. You would

both like to start a school on Socialist lines, and feel how well you could educate children on Froebelian and Kindergarten methods, if you could only start without being hampered by education authorities. It goes against the grain for you to cram children just to please H.M. Inspectors. You ask if anything could be done to form an orphanage for the children of Socialists, with yourself and husband in charge? I should say that is very uncertain. But possibly this paragraph may meet the eye of friends who can suggest other openings for you. I will keep your letter and give your address to any such. Meanwhile, do not be downhearted.

**TROUBLED COMRADE.**—I reported all those awful things, and hope there is an improvement by now.

**T. McK.**—Your letter came like sweet incense, restful, thoughtful, all till I got to the end, and read the address—Workhouse! Dare I believe that you are actually happy there, with leisure to read and think, and no worry about money?

**A. H. (Bradford).**—You can get all information re Adult Suffrage from the Secretary, Adult Suffrage Society, 122, Gower Street, London, W.C.

**TROUBLED.**—You foolish child, not to give me your name or address, or even a *nom de plume*; and wanting your answer so quickly, too. I have read your letter twice over, and enter thoroughly into your feelings. Of course you are young, and do not want to die. And there is no reason why you should die. It is your positive duty to live and be happy, and to make others happy. But you can make no one happy, your future husband or anybody else, by retailing the story of that sad incident in your life. The storm has passed—shut up your umbrella—and may another never come. Do give me your address next time you write. You may find my friending useful sometime.

**WANTED.**—Six Homeless Typists to dine Christmas Day with would-be Socialist. Names and addresses to "HOMELESS," WOMAN WORKER, Worship Street, London, E.C.

#### FOR SALE.

**A BARGAIN PARCEL** of One Dozen Choice Assorted 1d., 2d., and 3d. Xmas Cards, post free for 1s.—THE MODERN LIBRARY COMPANY, 6, Woodley's Court, Corporation Street, Manchester. Socialist publications kept in stock.

**ANTIQUE CHEST (OAK) DRAWERS.**—Bugle Clock. Also Downer Chest for immediate disposal.—X. Y. Z., c/o WOMAN WORKER OFFICE, 44, Worship Street, London, E.C.

**BLOUSES.**—Exceptional Value.—Cream Delaines, beautifully embroidered; Fancy coloured Delaines; all from 2/11. Jap Silks from 3/6. Good Flannelettes 1/11, 2/6. Satisfaction guaranteed. Catalogue free.—Dept. W., NOTTINGHAM WAREHOUSE CO., Nottingham.

**CENTURY THERMAL BATH CABINET** (unused). Wicket stove, or article of furniture. Birmingham. 22.

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

**THE TOPIC OF THE HOUR.**—"The Salvation Army and the Public," by John Manson, 8d. "A Lay Sermon," by Ingersoll, 10pp. 1/4d. each, 8d. per doz., post free. Just Out. "The New York Truth-seeker" says it's "one of the finest addresses in favour of the working men of the world ever delivered."—N. LEVY, Rationalists Club, 12, Hill Square Edinburgh.

**20,000 yds. Nottingham Lace Given Away.**—Valenciennes, Torchons, Insertions; 5 yds. free with each assorted 1s. parcel.—TAYLOR, Lace Merchant, Ilkeston.

Those who have cast-off or misfit clothing to sell should use this page well. It should be also an Exchange and Mart for furniture, books, china, etc.

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

#### THE SUFFRAGE.

##### The Albert Hall Brutalities.

The grave and very unpleasant allegations made about the behaviour of brutal men at the Albert Hall meeting have not, as yet, been substantiated by any formal and frank statement on the part of the ladies assaulted. Until they are, the effect of what has been said by Suffragette leaders and a writer in the "New Age" must, unfortunately, be limited to those who either hear of these brutalities privately, or are ready to imagine vaguely what they were.

It is strongly denied that the stewards were guilty of any undue violence whatever; and there has been good evidence that the worst cases occurring in the hall itself were those of interference by angry men who were not officials.

##### A Passive Resistance Movement.

Mrs. Despard's logic that women who are charged with taxes ought not to pay them until taxation carries representation has brought her to the point of being arrested for default. Judgment was granted against her last Wednesday in the High Court.

To a journalist who asked her how far she would go in this resistance, Mrs. Despard said: "I shall go to prison sooner than pay the tax, as I am determined to fight the women's battle. I will not submit to taxation without representation."

It is certain that other members of the Women's Freedom League will wish to follow their leader's courageous example. The meeting of the League at St. James's Hall showed that Mr. Lloyd George's speech did not satisfy them. It was held not to affect the position created by Mr. Asquith in May; and the attitude taken then by the League is known, of course.

##### Moving Appeal by Miss Maloney.

Miss Maloney's speech at St. James's Hall was marked by a fine passage in which she referred to the misery of unemployment. She broke down in tears, exclaiming, "Oh, I cannot speak!"

By a smart reporter of one of the daily papers—there are very many of these young men—she was said to have "worked herself up to a frenzy of passion." In a letter pointing out the unfairness of this report—for which the editor of the paper expressed regret—Mrs. Elizabeth Russell wrote:

"My chief protest refers to the words describing Miss Maloney's impassioned utterance on the misery and suffering of London, its thousands of unemployed, its starving of women and children, and the driving of many women and girls to worse than starvation, as 'a frenzy of passion,' presumably for the passing of the Women's Franchise Bill now before Parliament.

"Miss Maloney's speech was a magnificent, if heart-rending, appeal to all to see with their own eyes the appalling misery around us, even in this one city, 'enough for a hundred worlds,' she said, and to do something definite and at once to try and stop it at the root-cause.

"If I knew of any better way than the giving of votes to women, then I would not care one jot for the vote," were Miss Maloney's words."

#### A WISE AND GRACEFUL BOOK.

"The Nativity of Adam," a little volume of Mr. William Stewart's essays and sketches published by the Reformers' Bookstall, 126, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, makes delightful reading for whoever knows that Socialism is a religion of good feeling. All that "Gavroche" writes is instinct with that quality. If anyone who does not know his work desires a proof of it, here is a passage on the craze for "originality" in authors—and their dread of "the commonplace":

"The commonplace! The earth itself is a commonplace. The sun, moon, and stars are commonplace; the green grass, the blue skies, the stately trees, the lofty hills, the mountains and the valleys, the seven seas and the winds of heaven, they are all commonplace. They are thus all the time. And why should we, who by the light of the common sun and moon sail to and fro upon these common seas, and run hither and thither upon this common earth, and shall all ere long sleep quietly and commonly enough in its bosom—why should we strive to be uncommon? It is a vain endeavour. It is true to-day as in the days of the wisest old commonplace King, 'there is no new thing under the sun,' only a different embellishment of the things that are old and common, and therefore precious and true."

Or take Mr. Stewart's reflections on the news contained in a Christmas number of one of the society papers—all about the people in "Vanity Fair."

"I suppose they are happy in a way, and as far as their ideal of happiness goes. The unfortunate young woman who last week began her married life in chains—chains of pearls—costing £60,000, must have been happy. She could not know the real cost of those pearls. She could not know their cost in human life and labour. She could not know that on her pretty shoulders were the year's earnings of one thousand men. She could not know that 60,000 little children in London were hungry because their fathers' labours had gone to produce pearls and other adornments instead of food. Could she have known these things, I think she would not have been happy. 'I think so, because I believe that human nature is much the same in Vanity Fair as it is in Slumland. I am not at this season of good will preaching the doctrine of hatred.'"

#### SOCIALIST CHRISTMAS CARDS.

If we must spend money on Christmas greetings—and, to be sure, Christmas means no less to us than to those who think its kindness good only for the season—it is well to have cards that mean what we mean, and the profits on which go to the cause, and not to some indifferent tradesman.

Here is a set of eight very tasteful plain cards published by the Socialist Society, Leazes Park Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, at 1s. 3d. the set, with special terms to branches for resale. They have excellent portraits of Socialist leaders—William Morris, H. M. Hyndman, Robert Blatchford (two), Karl Marx, Julia Dawson, Keir Hardie, and Victor Grayson—and a little epigram of each for a motto. These cards ought to have a large sale.

## WARNING

You cannot be too careful in buying wholemeal, for even when it is stone ground from the whole wheat the sharp, cutting husk or outer covering of the grain will cause irritation of the stomach and internal organs, which means that only partial assimilation of the food takes place—a very dangerous thing, especially with invalids.

By our patent process (invented after years of tireless experiment and investigation) the outer covering is specially treated, and, rendered entirely harmless without removing any of the natural constituents of the grain, which are all retained.

**IN NO OTHER WHOLEMEAL CAN THIS BE DONE.**

We have had over 30 years' experience in milling wholemeal, and have a large mill working on it exclusively.

## "ARTOX"

### PURE WHOLEMEAL

Has stood the test for 20 years,

and absolutely justifies all that is claimed for it. Refuse all substitutes and imitations.

#### A "CLARION" reader writes

"We tried it first of all on a bit o' t'owd sort—a YORKSHIRE PUDDING, you know—and it was SIMPLY SCRUMPTIOUS. All are agreed as to the really fine quality of the bread, in fact, barely after a fortnight's trial we have about LOST THE TASTE FOR WHITE BREAD."

Constipation is unknown where Artox is in regular use. What this means need not be said. Cures that sound almost miraculous are reported by those who have had the courage to live exclusively upon wholemeal food and fruit.

#### SEND TO-DAY

for our handsome booklet, "Crains of Common Sense,"

post free if you mention WOMAN WORKER. It contains a host of delightful recipes that will make your table a board of health and delight.



**INSIST upon having "ARTOX." Eat only "ARTOX" Bread, and have all your puddings, pies, cakes, &c., made of "ARTOX" Wholemeal. You may safely banish white flour, for all you make with it can be made better with "ARTOX."**

Sold in 3lb. 7lb. and 14lb. sealed linen bags; or 28lb. will be sent direct, carriage paid, for 4s. 6d.

**IMPORTANT**—"ARTOX" is only retailed in our sealed bags, and is not sold loose.

**APPLEYARDS, Ltd. (Dep. N), Millers, .....ROTHERHAM**

## ATTRACTIVE ADVERTISEMENTS.

In order to meet a want long felt by readers of THE WOMAN WORKER, this page in future will be devoted to attractive advertisements. That is to say, we shall insert in it such advertisements as will attract readers by their usefulness.

May I appeal very specially to women to help to make this page useful by using it? Whether you want to buy or sell, or hire, or make inquiries of any sort, use this page.

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

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

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

JULIA DAWSON.

#### SITUATIONS WANTED.

**WOMAN** wants Situation as Housekeeper to Working Man, Socialist preferred. Thoroughly understands domestic duties.—Glasgow. 26.

**YOUNG WOMAN** requires situation as Nurse to one or two children or as Housemaid in small family.—C. W. 230, Peckham Rye, S.E.

#### SITUATIONS VACANT.

**WANTED,** a Capable Girl as General Servant comfortable home.—Mrs. COPE, 152, Croxted Road, W. Dulwich.

#### APARTMENTS.

**DEVON, "PENLEE,"** Nr. DARTMOUTH.—Home for Rest and Recreation. Sunny, romantic cliff situation. Vegetarian. Every home comfort. Sea bathing. Christmas Party.

**LONDON.—PECKHAM RYE, S.E.**—Comfortable Home offered Lady or Two Friends. Moderate terms. Board optional. Near tram and park.—11, Carden Road.

**LODGINGS** required in healthy part (N., N.E., or E.) by Young man (Socialist). Quiet; no piano preferred. State terms and number in family.—W. A. F., c/o WOMAN WORKER OFFICE, 44, Worship Street, London, E.C.

**TO INVALIDS.**—A vacancy occurs in the home of a Trained Nurse for delicate or aged lady or gentleman. Bracing part, Surrey. Terms, moderate.—BETA, c/o WOMAN WORKER OFFICE, 44, Worship Street, E.C.

**WANTED TO PURCHASE** in or near Liverpool. House built on "ideal" principles; with garden. Has any reader had such a house built? Would be grateful to know how planned, etc.—Liverpool. 24.

#### CLOTHING.

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

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

**BOOKS WANTED** by Bernard Shaw, Wm. Morris, Carpenter, Robert Owen. Anything on Socialism before 1845.—TURNER, 60, Preston Street, Brighton.

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

**MAN** (30) Clerk, fair prospects, Socialist, known in movement and career easily ascertainable, desires to meet with healthy, helpful young woman, view to matrimony. Strict confidence. No agency need write.—Address: WOMAN WORKER OFFICE.—Torquay. 25.

### CAN WOMEN GRADUATES VOTE At Edinburgh?

#### THE APPEAL TO THE LORDS.

Miss J. C. Macmillan and Miss Frances Simson failed last week in their appeal to the House of Lords against the decision of the Edinburgh Court of Session, which denied them the right to vote in the election of the Parliamentary representative of Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities.

The case they submitted was a very interesting one. They had some evidence that in times past women had voted, and argued that there is no common law disability.

The Lord Chancellor, however, did not think the case proved. It might be that some record was to be found of women having taken part in Parliamentary elections. Women in the past might have been called upon to nominate candidates in the same irregular way as was done by men. But this right of voting had been confined to men by ancient practice from the earliest times. Only on the clearest proof of the existence in ancient times of such a right of women could their claim be allowed.

The appellants had contended that whilst the Act in one case specified "men," the word "person" was used in another section. "Person" would *prima facie* include women; but this section added, "not subject to any legal incapacity." And the word "person" was used when women were not allowed to be graduates.

Lord Ashbourne and other lords concurring, the appeal was dismissed with costs.

### PETER PAN'S LETTERS.

Miss Pauline Chase has got out a charming book of children's letters, which she calls "Peter Pan's Post Bag." She has received them all while acting in Mr. Barrie's play. Here, for example, is one from a very small correspondent:

"Dear Peter Pan, will you please come to see me in bed. And take me to Never Never Land, but bring me back in time for breakfast?"

A little older, they ask how to fly. It is: "My dear Peter Pan, kindly show me how to fly? Your loving Ronie," or "Please will you tell me how you fly?—From Hughie." Says one: "I have been trying to fly like you all day." Pathetic! And one really ought to know what came of it.

Here is a charming picture from the nursery: "We have just finished acting Peter Pan over again. But we could not do it properly because there were only four of us. I had to be John in the first scene and a lost boy and James Hook at the same time. My brother had to be Michael and a lost boy, the only one in the pirate scene, so I had to say that I wanted half of him for a cabin boy, and that half of him was to walk the plank at once. Please will you come and teach us to fly one day?"

Everyone who loves children will love this unique little book. They do believe in fairies.

### THE HERRING GUTTERS.

#### A Northumberland Hut.

Mrs. Emily Tozer writes from St. John's Vicarage, Heywood, about the conditions of the herring workers in a fishing hamlet on the Northumbrian coast. She says:

"The gutting is done by the wives and daughters of the fishermen and a few strangers. It is really hard work, especially when the catch is a good one; for they do not let the herrings wait even one night: they must be finished the day they are caught. This means weary hours sitting or standing in cramped positions in the open (or at best in draughty sheds) in all kinds of weather. When one asked about the legality of the hours, 'Perishable commodities' was the reply.

"One curer had brought a batch of Eyemouth girls to work for him—such nice, refined, intelligent girls. They were friendly, and asked us to go and see them in their temporary home.

"We found them located in a large wooden hut. There were eight or nine of them, and a very nice motherly woman (a widow), who, in addition to her own work at the herrings, cooked for them and overlooked things generally. They were delighted to see us; but their master (who seemed to have the *entrée* of the hut) was seated there. He scouted the idea of Socialism ever making the conditions of workers more humane, yet in the same breath declared that it was man's inhumanity to man which caused all the evil in this world. This man compelled these poor girls to sleep several in a bed not nearly large enough for them—some at the top and some at the bottom. Can you imagine it? The feet of the bottom girls almost touching the chins of the top girls! To me this was awful, and I cannot forget it.

"In that hut there was no privacy of any kind—no screen (however rude), no bath. They used their boxes for seats. There was a plentiful supply of earwigs, which dropped down in shoals on their beds and clothes.

"I am very proud of my friendship with these girls, and hope I may see them again, though I did tease them about being so fond of herrings that they must even be packed in like them—in their beds. One girl told me her father would not allow her to go to Lerwick again. He had been there himself. We advised these girls when they went to strange towns to seek out the Socialist quarters or branches, and so find the 'women workers,' who would interest themselves in them and show them how to combine."

### Minimum Wage for Clerks.

At the annual demonstration of the National Union of Clerks at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, last week, a resolution was passed in favour of a minimum wage of 35s. per week for clerks on reaching the age of 21 years.

It was resolved also that all offices and places where clerks have to work ought to be brought within the provisions of the Factory Acts.

## ... Books for ... Xmas Presents

### ARTHUR'S

By  
A. NEIL  
LYONS.

"Arthur's" is universally acknowledged to be one of the most striking and successful books of the season. In view of the Xmas rush, the CLARION has secured a number of copies so that none of our readers shall be disappointed in obtaining one. Order early, please!

4/6, by post 4/9.

### DOLLY BALLADS

With 280 Illustrations by Frank Chesworth.

By  
ROBERT  
BLATCH-  
FORD.

An intensely amusing book for children of all ages. Dolly tells in childish rhyme the story of "Bluebeard," or "The Bishump and the Crocodile."—One of the most delightful examples of child diction. The illustrations by Chesworth are exquisite, and there are two hundred and eighty of them. No child should be without a copy.

3/6, by post 3/9.

### JACK'S WIFE

By  
R. B.  
SUTHERS.

A companion volume to "A Man, A Woman, and a Dog," which was described as one of the funniest books ever written.

2/6, by post 2/9.

### UNSENTIMENTAL JOURNEYS

With Illustrations by Frank Chesworth.

By  
EDWARD  
FRANCIS  
FAY.

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### THE LONDON WORKROOMS.

#### The Government Obdurate.

Mrs. Nodin, in a letter addressed to Mr. Asquith on behalf of the Women's Labour League, has appealed for the extension of the London workrooms.

She pointed out that the difficulty as to sales was due to restrictions imposed by Mr. Burns himself, and added, with respect to the Mansion House sale, which opened on Monday:

"We agree with Mr. Burns that it is not satisfactory to have public work financed by such devices as this, but those who know the value of the workrooms to the women are determined not to let them be closed for lack of funds.

"This autumn the number of women registering from September 24 to December 9 has been 1,057, far exceeding all previous records. During this period 173 women have received work, being only 26.5 per cent. of those registered. We know personally of hundreds of other women out of work who have not registered because they know that it is useless with only three workrooms for the whole of London.

"From September 24 to December 5, 1908, £985 (gross) has been spent on women's work, as compared with £20,608 (gross) on the men's. On March 16 last the Central (Unemployed) Body wrote to Mr. Burns that 'the recoupment from the women's work exceeds that of any other branch of the Central Body's activities. Since then the receipts from sales have been diminished owing to Mr. Burns's own action, but £5,338 has already been realised, and should the stock on hand be sold at its estimated price, the recoupment will work out at 49 per cent., a better financial return than is obtained in any of the other experiments.'

In reply, Mr. Asquith said on December 8:

"Mr. Burns is of opinion that past experience does not justify him in encouraging any extension of a scheme undertaken as an experiment, and assisted on the ground that it was an experiment out of the grant.

"Mr. Asquith is, however, confident that any practical scheme which you may suggest to Mr. Burns for securing employment for unemployed women will receive his sympathetic consideration."

Mrs. Baines was released on Saturday, and warmly greeted.

Mr. Lloyd George now declines to speak at any meeting where women are present. It seems to be generally accepted that the Budget will provide for higher licence duties and a tax on land values.

Dr. Garrett Anderson, the lady mayor of Aldeburgh, gave a banquet on Saturday night to the local corporation. Replying to the toast of Aldeburgh's prosperity, she said she hoped to be a motherly sort of housekeeper to the town. The Hunger Marchers who have made a four months' tour of the country—twenty out of the hundred who set out—returned to town on Saturday. They have visited thirty towns and travelled a thousand miles.

Dr. Macnamara points out that Poor Law relief is wastefully administered. In the Metropolitan area one result of the present scheme of thirty-one self-contained sets of similar institutions is that we have to spend something like £860,000 a year on Poor Law officials alone.

### WOMEN'S LABOUR LEAGUE.

Edited by Mrs. J. R. MacDonald.

A full attendance of the Executive, with the exception of Mrs. Bruce Glasier, was held in London on Friday, when final arrangements were made for the Portsmouth Conference on January 26. Mrs. Simm, National Organiser, was also present, and gave interesting accounts of her work during the past quarter, both in Scotland and the North of England. Some of this has already been reported in this column. Nine branches are now within reach of each other for the North-Eastern District Conference meetings, and the next one is being arranged for early in January.

#### Facing Difficulties.

Mrs. Simm reported that Crook and Shildon branches are holding their meetings regularly and educating their members by readings and discussions. Crook has gained a few more members, but Shildon needs help, as it is in a lonely part, and cut off from others. Throckley cannot hold meetings in the bad weather, as the members live miles apart from each other on dark country roads, but Mrs. Simm is keeping in communication with the Secretary. Gateshead, owing to the I.L.P. taking new rooms, is at present homeless, but meetings are being held in a member's house, and a good programme is followed weekly with keen interest.

Hebburn has been in a bad way, but on Mrs. Simm's last visit she found members anxious to be at work again, and some new women likely to join. The I.L.P. there has taken a club, so the women are arranging for socials, etc., jointly as well as for their W.L.L. members alone.

#### A Mission to Liberal Husbands.

Benwell branch is doing very well indeed, and the fortnightly meetings are enthusiastic and well attended. Several of the women who have joined have husbands who have hitherto voted Liberal, and the wives are keen to get arguments at the W.L.L. meetings to help to convert their husbands to the Labour cause.

#### Medical Inspection and the L.C.C.

The following resolution was moved by Miss Margaret McMillan, seconded by Dr. Ethel Bentham, and carried, at the last public meeting of the Central London Branch, when Miss McMillan showed slides illustrating her lecture upon the need for both medical inspection and feeding:

"That inasmuch as no education can be of much use unless the physical condition and nutrition of the children is good, but, on the contrary, may be highly injurious, this meeting calls on the London County Council and other education authorities to make adequate provision both for the medical inspection and treatment of the children, and to put into force efficiently without further delay the Act for the Provision of Meals."

#### Local Influence at Wood Green.

For the following account of the way the Wood Green W.L.L. is making itself felt in the district, we are indebted to one of our honorary members (of the other sex), Mr. Frethey:

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Our Women's Labour League at Wood Green is indeed active, and making itself felt throughout the whole district. At the elections for Urban Councillors and Guardians in March last, the members worked hand in hand with the Men's Labour League, and although in both cases unsuccessful, they put up a strenuous fight, such as the district has seldom had before, and secured upwards of 900 votes for Mr. Tudor Rhys for the Council, and 1,425 supporters for Mrs. Frethey for the Guardians, the latter result being more than 400 votes higher than secured the return of two Guardians for the previous election. It is, however, a satisfaction to add that Mr. Tudor Rhys secured a seat on the Council at a subsequent by-election, and is day after day at the numerous committee meetings now being held, fighting the cause of Labour and Justice. Recently, the Women's League suggested the idea of a movement on behalf of the local unemployed, and the Men's League and the I.L.P. coalescing, a strong "Right to Work" Committee was the result. This committee, by means of public meetings, deputations to the Council and to the local M.P., and last, but not least, processions of the unemployed to services at local churches, have caused the Council to depart from an attitude of passivity; and if a Distress Committee will not be the ultimate outcome, at least work will be expedited, mainly for the purpose of putting into employment as many of the poor out-of-workers as is possible. The Women's League, together with the local Adult Schools, and other women's organisations, are also pressing the Education Committee and the Council in respect of the feeding of necessitous school children, and although they have no present promise of the Act being adopted, they have good hopes that a scheme will be commenced by the Council for the feeding of the half-starved and suffering children, of school age, of the poor unemployed.

#### Feeding the Children.

Pending consideration and arrangements for the fitting up of several centres for the serving of meals (for the scheme has not yet been definitely agreed to by the Council), a voluntary movement has been commenced by the Women's League and the I.L.P., and as many as 140 poor deserving children are now being supplied with a substantial dinner each day.

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