

THE CATHOLIC SUFFRAGIST

Organ of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, 55, Berners Street, London.

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which *you* shall give,
Daughter of the newer Eve?

—*Francis Thompson.*

THE UNDERMINING OF MARRIAGE.

BY MARGUERITE FEDDEN.

Marriage being the normal state of most people, the degree of respect in which it is held is of the highest importance to the race.

Outside the Church there are varying standards of marriage, ranging from that in which the wife is of little more importance than her husband's servant, his ox or his ass, to the independent coupling of man and woman in a Godless contract.

On the other hand, the Church, with her austere morality and enlightening faith, gives us an ideal so lofty and yet so practical that, having once envisaged it, the vision of the perfect Christian union remains as a lasting inspiration.

Supremely satisfied with their own outlook, and feeling perhaps that their whole duty is performed in endeavouring to realise their ideal and by trying to convert others to it, many Catholics appear somewhat indifferent to the non-Catholics' attitude towards the institution of marriage. It must be Catholicism or nothing! In their enthusiasm for daylight they forget that twilight is more helpful to the vision than the blackness of night. Surely an unpractical attitude!

Humanly speaking, multitudes of their fellows will live and die outside the body of the Church and their views on subjects of the importance of marriage and parenthood should be as elevated as possible, both for the greater glory of God and their own welfare.

For instance, though divorce finds no recognition in the Catholic world, the differentiating divorce laws existent in only two European countries, our own and Greece, are a direct incentive to masculine vice and the bi-moral standard.

A man may divorce his wife for unfaithfulness, whereas, as Lord Mersey told us in the Divorce Commission, by the English law a wife has no right of legal grievance if her husband chooses to keep a second establishment. Actively to combat all conditions subversive to the honour in which marriage is held is an obvious duty, even if they threaten no personal danger, also, because the low standards of the world may tend to weaken the ideals of frail spirits in the Church. Aloofness in this matter is folly, and ignorance of certain dangers abroad must largely account for it. There is no need to dwell on open attacks made on marriage by the libertine, the eugenist, the materialist, the advocates of free love, Neo-Malthusianism, etc., which being recognised menaces can be openly fought.

But the trend of thought and action begotten of the veiled and insidious onslaughts against marriage, whether conscious or unconscious, made by law, bye-law and convention (that shadow of the law) is not so easily parried. Too many people have a blind confidence in State legislation; the State is not infallible, and it is time we should awaken to past and current law-making which, penalising marriage, is calculated to popularise unrecognised unions among those without strong principles.

Is it an encouragement to a self-respecting woman to feel when she marries that not only is her subjection to her husband enforced by the State in many preposterous particulars, but that in law he has complete control over the religion, education and general upbringing of the children? She can enforce no

pre-marital promises. A woman is only the recognised parent of her child if it is born out of wedlock.

A wife has no right to money earned in common, and a man may leave by will all his money away from her, leaving her penniless, even if she has helped by devoted work in the building up of his business. A father inherits from the child to the exclusion of the mother; if there is no father, the mother shares equally with the brothers and sisters in the "personal" property, but has no share of the "real" property, all of which goes to her dead husband's relations.

If a man dies intestate, his widow is worse treated by the law than a widower whose wife has died without making a will.

The working-class wife has no effective claim to maintenance; if her husband will not support her she has no alternative but to break up the home and go with her children into the workhouse, leaving the guardians in their own interest to obtain the money if they can, or if they consider it worth while.

The National Health Insurance Act, though considerably amended owing to steady agitation, still bristles with injustice to women, e.g., it does not recognise women's work in the home. A domestic worker in her own home is not insurable, neither is a widow except at prohibitive rates.

Then again, maternity benefit is paid to married and unmarried women, in the former case it is paid on the husband's contributions, thus relegating the wife to the position of his chattel. Unmarried mothers' benefit is paid from the funds of the women's societies, funds already depleted by the extra sickness among women due to underpayment and sweating; thus the men's societies whose members include the fathers of these illegitimate children do not lose. The fact that only 4 to 5 per cent. of our soldiers have been able to marry "on the strength," has been a grave menace to marriage, and the cause of many illicit unions, leading to subterfuge and even tragedy.

The Aliens Act of 1914 is another discouragement to marriage; the patriotism taught at school must be an empty form if the State wrests her nationality from a woman marrying a foreigner.

Except in London and those boroughs

where the Revising Barrister deems the desirability of married women to vote removed by the Qualification of Women Act of 1907, the municipal franchise is denied married women who, with their children, have so much at stake in administration, that happy hunting ground recommended to reforming women by certain Anti-Suffragists.

The London County Council, the largest municipal authority in the Empire, has decided that women doctors in their employ, who have devoted many years and much money to their training, shall resign on marriage, also certain education authorities have the same rule for their teachers.

To judge if their employees perform their work efficiently is the employers' concern, not to investigate their private concerns; a woman must herself decide if she is able to carry on her professional duties without neglect of higher calls. Owing to the shortage of doctors and teachers we find since the war, these rulings have been somewhat abrogated in practice, but on grounds of expediency, not on principle.

An affront to marriage is the advertisement often found in otherwise respectable papers. "Man and wife wanted—no encumbrance," etc. Encumbrance is the term passed by the advertisement manager for children. Then again, we have a discouragement to marriage in the difficulty experienced by parents, both in flatland and slumland, in obtaining house shelter.

The poor seeking rooms in mean streets can often obtain no shelter if they disclose the real number of their children, and sometimes the family surplus has to be smuggled into the house in an orange box under cover of darkness, thus proving the State's dilatoriness in dealing with Housing.

Pope Leo XIII. taught that each breadwinner should have an adequate living wage on which to bring up his family in decent frugality, but his ruling is not carried out in this country of ours, and now that the purchasing power of £1 is reduced to between 15/- and 16/- owing to the war prices of food and fuel, it is more necessary than ever to point to this lack in wages as a menace to marriage.

(Continued on page 13).

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

It is greatly to be regretted that Catholic investigators should have seen fit to publish the result of their enquiry into the alleged increase of drinking among women, before the official report of the Government Commission sitting on this subject. As to the scandalous suggestion put forward that because a section of women are drinking excessively (for full information on this alleged excessive drinking among women we await the official report), the separation allowances of soldiers' and sailors' dependents should be under control, we hope and believe that women are even now too powerful for this indignity to be put upon them. The authorities would have to reckon with every suffragist in the land, and with other societies of women. Speaking in the House of Commons last year in relation to members' salaries, Mr. Asquith said that it was the duty of the House to allocate these salaries; to examine how these salaries were spent would be the end of the decencies of public life. "I absolutely refuse," he said, "to answer, whether to this House or to any other body, how I spend my money." The same principle holds good for the poorest woman in the land. We have a horror of drunkenness *both in men and women*, but we have a horror, too, of the hectoring and bullying of the poor by the well-to-do. The privacy of the worker's home is as sacred to us as the privacy of the rich.

Nor are we among those who think that 12/6 a week leaves a margin for lavish expenditure. Let any person who thinks it does try living on that sum for a time, even allowing for the extra allotment for children. Rent, food, light, firing, and clothing have to be provided. If the experiment were given an honest trial, we think we should hear considerably less of the thriftlessness and drunkenness of soldiers' and sailors' dependents.

Amid talk of compulsory saving and the alleged thriftlessness of the working classes, it is a pleasure to read the sane and reasoned article, "What Working Women Think" (as to savings), by Margaret Llewelyn Davies, which appeared in a recent number of the

"Daily News." "Apart from the extra expenditure needed to meet the exceptional strain," the writer tells us, "the majority of the workers have so great a leeway to make up before reaching a proper level of health and comfort, that the truest economy from a national point of view is to encourage the spending of much of the extra wages. Mothers are providing warmer clothes for their children, two pairs of boots instead of one, and better food. This valuable expenditure is very apparent among many of the wives of soldiers, the improved appearance of whose children is noticed by teachers and others." This does not mean, the writer says later, that working women do not recognise the necessity of saving where possible, and she shows how this can be, and is being done.

We were glad to welcome so many members at the annual meeting, a report of which appears in another column. Councillor Ellen Chapman, and Mrs. Clarke, M.A., have been nominated to the Committee, which owing to present circumstances has been temporarily enlarged.

No Catholic can be indifferent to any lowering of the high ideals of Christian marriage, and we thank Miss Fedden for bringing before us some of the ways in which marriage is penalised and the dignity of the wife lowered.

Next month we shall have the pleasure of an article from Miss Christopher St. John.

(Continued from page 12).

The State trades on the respect for religion and order innate in most women, but how long will intelligent women submit to such lopsided, as opposed to balanced, legislation?

Catholic Suffragists, their eyes on the far horizon, view with abhorrence these dangers, and ask for political power to cope with them—in a word Citizenship.

How long are their hands to be held politically? When will the bonds be cut, which are so galling and meaningless, freeing them for service and giving them extended scope for practical charity?

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY,

Office: 55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON.

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Hon. Editor MISS LEONORA de ALBERTI.
Hon. Business Manager MISS O'SULLIVAN.
Hon. Treasurer MISS BRADY.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

THE LAST LINK.

At the corner of a sordid street which abuts on to one of the main thoroughfares of London, there is a woman who runs a fruit stall. She is a keen suffragist and I often stop for a chat with her. She gives me her views of the world as run by men; time women did a bit of cleaning up, she thinks, and suffragists, she knows, are all on the side of the poor. She has hopes for the future when women have come into their own.

But one afternoon in spring a small crowd stood round her barrow as I came up, a group of people with shocked serious faces. The barrow lady saw me coming and hailed me as a friend—she explained that a child had been run over, and had just been removed to the hospital. She had seen it all and felt her importance. Workmen returning home stopped to curse all owners of motor cars, and we stood, a motley gathering, listening to the woman's description of her own feelings, the child's appearance, what chance there might be of its recovery, of which she took a pessimistic view. And as we listened to her chatter a low murmur ran through the crowd and reached us, "The mother!" A woman was coming towards us surrounded by a crowd of children, who ran along in front and by her side, but never getting in her way, staring up at her wide-eyed. She was not weeping nor wringing her hands, she hurried by looking neither to right nor left, mechanically tying her bonnet strings. But for the stricken look in her eyes, she might have been a woman hurrying to work—she was a mother running to help her wounded child, to snatch it from the grasp

of death if maternal care could save it. The crowd stood reverently hushed to silence as she passed along her tragic way, leaving the mean streets strangely dignified. It was a sickening and a haunting sight. A woman near me fainted and was only saved from falling by a timely orange-box pushed forward by the alert saleswoman.

And since the day in August when the landmarks of civilisation were swept away, that tragic figure hurrying along in the spring sunshine has stood for me as the type of the stricken mothers of humanity; for the mothers of fallen friends and fallen foes alike have given their sons to their country with the same high courage, and the same secret agony. Very beautifully has this link of motherhood been expressed by Mr. James Douglas in his fine article "The Nation of Mothers," published soon after the outbreak of war. When all other links have snapped in the storm of war this link alone holds, he tells us: "The quality of motherhood is the same in every race. . . . Between the mothers of the young soldiers who are slaying each other there is the link of a common love. . . ." "The War-God may take everything else away, but this he cannot take. Through the smoke of burning cities we can descry the sweet, sad face of the eternal mother, yearning over a thousand battle-fields, searching the trenches with patient tenderness for the beloved face, laying a reverent hand on the graves of the unknown and unnumbered dead, and shedding over all the wild chaos of carnage a hallowed radiance of undying devotion. . . ." "The

mothers of mankind will not have suffered in vain if their suffering be the redemption of humanity." (And let me add thousands of young lives will not have been shattered and immolated in vain. For are we not told that the free men of Europe are shedding their blood to crush the demon of militarism). "Out of their anguish let the will of the world be born—the will to establish and keep peace on the earth against all its adversaries for ever."

It is surely a good omen that this moving appeal should have been written by a man; nor is it the only one, there have been many others of a similar nature if not of equal eloquence.

L. DE ALBERTI.

ANNUAL MEETING.

There was a good attendance at the annual meeting held at the Catholic Association Rooms on Saturday, 29th ult. Miss Smyth-Pigott, who was in the chair, reviewed the suffrage situation, and suggested many ways in which we could make the public understand the nature and urgency of our demand.

Miss Whately read the annual report. Miss Fedden, in moving the adoption of the report, said she was grateful that the leaders of the C.W.S.S. had not lost their heads at the outbreak of war, but had realised, that while doing their share to help the nation, suffrage work must continue. The report was very satisfactory, and she congratulated us on the success of our paper. Being a constant paper-seller (for which we indeed thank her), Miss Fedden told us that she received congratulations on all sides, from Catholics and non-Catholics. Mrs. Finlayson-Gauld in seconding the adoption of the report, put before us in a few eloquent words the meaning of suffrage to Catholic Suffragists. To us she said suffrage was the driving out of evil, and the bearing aloft of the banner of purity; thinking as we do for the C.W.S.S. to have lowered the suffrage banner, even in face of the European upheaval, would have been grievously wrong. We are linked together by the bond of faith, and it is our duty to carry the "suffrage message" to the Catholic world, and we had reason to congratulate ourselves on the work we had achieved.

Mrs. Merivale Mayer, in moving the adoption of the financial statement, said that the unselfishness displayed by women would bear fruit; even our bitterest opponents had changed their outlook, men had become afraid of the result of their power and of the uses to which they had put it.

Miss Christopher St. John, in seconding, said we must beware of too much optimism, for her own part her faith in the woman's movement filled her with cheerfulness, still we must not trust to the praise showered on women. It was well to take compliments with a pinch of salt, and look for deeds. In spite of the political truce we must be faithful to our principles, and no suffragist engaged on war work should miss an opportunity of holding on high the banner of votes for women.

Miss Fennell, in moving a vote of thanks to the Executive, paid a graceful tribute to the leaders of the C.W.S.S. The success of any cause, she said, depended on good leadership, and she had full confidence in the leaders of the C.W.S.S.; they had proved their good statesmanship, their vigour and adaptability. Miss Fennell also spoke of the fine work done by the honorary secretaries of branches, especially in keeping the suffrage movement alive during these times; it had been said that the movement had been driven underground, if so, she was confident that we were well entrenched and sure of victory. Miss Antonelli seconded the vote of thanks.

In appealing for funds for the office rent, Miss Gadsby said that she had been struck during the war by the multiplicity of appeals, and the generous response to each one; she had no apology to offer in coming forward with still another appeal; Suffrage aimed at removing the tragedies of peace, which were more far-reaching than the tragedies of war.

At the conclusion of the meeting Miss O'Sullivan appealed for paper-sellers, and explained that paper-selling was one of the most important works members could do for the Society and the suffrage cause. Miss O'Sullivan has herself sold over a thousand copies of our paper in the streets. She urged members to sell the "Catholic Suffragist" outside the House of Commons to shew how very much alive the suffrage movement is.

INFANT WELFARE.

MULTUM FACIT QUI MULTUM DILIGIT.

As a sequel to "A Voice in Rama," of the December issue of the CATHOLIC SUFFRAGIST, it may be useful to indicate briefly what is being done on behalf of Infant Welfare. A few hurried notes, with reference to further sources of information, must suffice in these busy war days. When we plead for little children, and their suffering mothers, there is no need to appeal to the heart! We will confine ourselves, therefore, mainly to the economic side of the question. We need not repeat here the statistics of Infant Mortality: they are a disgrace to a civilised nation. The nation cannot spare all these young lives. But even more serious for the welfare of the nation is the "unfitness" of the survivors—unfit physically, and therefore, in some degree, morally, they swell the ranks of the "casual labourer," filling our vagrant wards, our prisons, our asylums, our hospitals. It costs so little to keep a baby well: so much to cure him when ill: and a fortune to support him and his unhappy family through a manhood shattered, physically and morally, from pre-natal and infant days. This deplorable state of things is due to a multiplicity of causes, spiritual and material. The path of social progress lies along a score of converging lines,—better morals, better housing, better industrial conditions—all focussing in the welfare of the child. While we slowly and painfully struggle for improvement along all these lines, what instant and practical means have we of bettering the condition of our poorer mothers and children?

In answer to this insistent demand, there have sprung up in England and Wales during the last decade some 300 institutions known as "Infant Consultation Centres," "Schools for Mothers," "Mothers' Welcomes," &c. As to external administration, these "schools" may be entirely Municipal (there are over 40 such schools) with a large staff of paid workers, aided by voluntary workers. They may be "Voluntary Institutions," inspected, and approved and subsidised either by the Board of Education or the Local Government Board. They may be a mere private, and often extremely successful, enterprise. As regards finance they can, with economy and complete efficiency, cost almost any amount.

On the other hand, if a room or two can be borrowed once a week free of cost (a Town Hall is sometimes lent), and if a trained woman volunteer can attend a couple of hours once a week to see babies, and if a doctor can give his services, say, once a month, to examine the babies, a great deal can be done for almost nothing. A really adequate school can be "run" for some £400 a year, of which £200 can probably be recovered by a Government grant. The minimum necessity for a school is, as we have said, weekly advice to each mother on the simple hygiene and feeding of her baby, and the weighing of it, by a properly trained nurse. It is almost a necessity that a doctor should see periodically every child who attends, and very desirable that a doctor should do the weekly examination. This is the minimum. Now of what does an ideal Infant Centre consist? As a model, we may refer our readers to the little book describing the *Bradford Maternity Clinic* (published by King, Westminster, price 1/-). From this we see that a complete Infant Consultation Centre should be linked up (a) with work of local doctors and midwives, (b) with local hospitals, (c) with local charitable works, e.g., Invalid Children's Aid Associations, Invalid Dinner Centres, &c. It should itself comprise (1) a department for pre-natal advice (the mortality of children before birth is very high), also for friendly help in arranging for confinements. An actual Maternity ward would fulfil the ideal. (2) A weekly examination of infants up to a year by a trained nurse. (3) One or two doctor's days for seeing periodically all children, and also any ailing child. (4) The periodic inspection of all children under 5 (so linking up the work with the School Medical Inspection of the L.C.C.). (5) It is an immense advantage if "minor ailments" can be treated, as in the L.C.C. School Treatment Centres. (6) It would be ideal if "major ailments" could be treated, and if there could be a little in-patient Baby Clinic for children up to 5, and a dental department. (7) Of vital importance, and indeed, in many "schools" the chief feature is the educational work for the mothers in baby hygiene, cooking, sewing, and mending. To these, or some of these

LONDON AND BRANCHES.

Office: 55, Berners Street, London. During this month the office will be open from 10-30 to 12-30, and will not be open in the afternoon.

We offer our sincere thanks to Miss Whateley, who since the foundation of the Society has held the post of Honorary Treasurer. Through other claims on her time Miss Whateley has been compelled to resign the office, which Miss Jeffery has kindly consented to fill.

BRIGHTON AND WEST SUSSEX BRANCH.—Hon. Sec., Miss Busse, "Colonna," Old Shoreham Road, Brighton. A very delightful social and musical afternoon took place on January 7th at Rochester House, by kind permission of one of the members; the object being to give several rather lonely ones an opportunity of coming together and enjoying themselves in a quiet way. The harp playing of Miss Hardy was a real treat, and the fresh sweet voice of Miss Docker equally so.

The annual meeting took place on January 21st; in the absence of Mrs. Chapman, through ill-health, Miss Merrifield took the chair. The report for 1915 having been read the election of the members for the Committee took place. Miss Manning and Miss Wood were elected in place of Miss Bennett and Mrs. Lambert, who have resigned.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.—Hon. Sec., Miss T. M. Browne, M.A., University Hall, Fairfield, Liverpool. The annual meeting was held on Friday, January 28th, Mrs. McDonald presiding. The Secretary read the report of the year, and the balance sheet was adopted. The aims and activities of the Liverpool Women's Suffrage Club were described, and Miss Cooper spoke of the work of the club in Burlington Street for Soldiers' and Sailors' relatives. She made an urgent appeal for regular helpers. Lately, the organisers have often been single-handed for the whole evening. Even if members could promise only three or four consecutive Mondays or Thursdays this would be a great help.

Three vacancies were filled on the Committee which for 1916 stands as follows:—Mrs. McDonald, Mrs. Hughes, Misses Browne, Cooper, de Bulnes, Jervis, Lenn, McKinley, Parle, Shannon.

Miss McKinley has kindly taken on the office of Treasurer for another year.

The sale of papers throughout the year was reported to be very satisfactory, thanks to the efforts of Miss Murray and those who have sold the paper regularly.

Copies of the Annual Report (price 1d., 1½d. post free), may be had from the Secretary. Those who have subscribed for 1915 receive a copy. Members are urgently asked to bring their subscriptions up-to-date.

On Friday, February 25th, there will be a Musical Evening for members and friends, from 7-30 to 10 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. Refreshments 6d. As the paper will be out in good time for our meeting, there will be no other notification except to those who do not take the paper. The Secretary would be glad to know the numbers of those able to come in order to arrange for the catering.

All those who have heard Father Walshe lecture will be glad to hear that he will address the Suffrage Club next month. As the date fixed is March 21st (not 14th as given at first), another announcement will appear in the next issue.

The Club still meets on the first Thursday of every month at 8 p.m., 18, Colquitt Street.

courses, young girls, school teachers, &c., might be admitted. (8) The practical training of workers.

Many of us can have the privilege of helping in some way to carry on this work. There are paid posts to be obtained by properly trained women. A trained woman who can give her services is invaluable. There is need for hundreds of such women: neither the Government nor charitable institutions can afford to pay more than a few—so the work will go undone unless there are volunteers. The services of the untrained, even those who can give only a short time, are also welcomed. But three conditions seem essential to securing the greatest benefit from such workers:— (1) That they work, in a docile spirit, in a Centre where they are adequately supervised by a trained worker. (2) That they be women of tact and sympathy. (3) That as a *minimum* of "theoretical training" they read enough to have some faint idea of social conditions among the poor, and some rudimentary knowledge of laws of health and infant care.

The following further sources of information, among many others, may prove useful: (1) The Offices of the National Association for the Prevention of Infant Mortality, at 4, Tavistock Square, W.C., where information is freely given *re* training, lectures, &c., and where the organ, "National Health," can be obtained (3d. a month), and a directory of all Schools for Mothers affiliated to the Central body. (2) National Health Society, 53, Berners Street, W., where an admirable training course is given. (3) Hugh Ashby, on *Infant Mortality* (10/6). (4) *Schools for Mothers*, by Dr. Isabel Gibbons (6d.), at 4, Tavistock Square.

Corresponding with this ten years' work of the schools, we find, at least up to the war, a great decrease in Infant Mortality, and hence in infant disease. The two facts seem to have some connection. In view of what has been accomplished, and of what *can* be accomplished, simply by personal service—for we need service even more than money—we can, look forward, as the Advent antiphons ring in our ears, to the day when our land shall rejoice in the laughter and the loveliness of even the poorest of its little children.

ETHEL R. BARKER.*

* The writer has no connection with any Suffrage Society.

REVIEWS.

THE EAST LONDON FEDERATION OF THE SUFFRAGETTES (FIRST ANNUAL REPORT). It has been sometimes wrongly asserted that the suffrage agitation is a movement of women of the propertied classes. We know that that is not the case, for every suffrage society is composed of women of all classes. But, in a very real sense, it is the East London Federation of Suffragettes, inspired by Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, who has aroused the mass of working women. Miss Pankhurst carried the suffrage message right into the heart of the East End, realising that "the women of East London suffer, perhaps, more from evil social conditions than the people of any other part of the civilised world, and, therefore, these women, perhaps more than any others, most urgently need the vote. On the other hand, the comparative nearness to the House of Commons of this vast industrial area makes it possible for the women who live there to bring the pressure of a popular protest to bear on Parliament in a more effective way than that which is possible to their fellows who live further afield." The report of the E.L.F.S. is an exhilarating record of strenuous work and courageous fighting. It is also painful reading, for we are reminded—not that we could forget—that in our English prisons a few months ago women were forcibly fed and tortured for upwards of five weeks—Miss Pankhurst herself was one—for the offence of breaking a pane of glass. Small wonder that suffragists, for the most part, listened with ill-concealed or open disgust to the emotion displayed by the men who were responsible for this, over the execution of a woman in war time. It was only when Miss Pankhurst, like the poet in "The King's Threshold," declared her intention of starving to death on the steps of the House of Commons that the Prime Minister's obduracy was beaten, and he consented to receive a deputation of East London workers. Indeed, his attitude was by then so changed that it is very possible that, but for the war, a suffrage measure would have been wrung from the Liberal Government. Since the outbreak of war, the Federation, while keeping the Suffrage flag flying, has worked with unflagging zeal to help the East End poor. It has opened cost price restaurants, milk depôts, an employment bureau, a toy factory, and converted a public house in the Old Ford Road into the Mothers' Arms for a free milk depôt. Nor has the Federation been lacking in vigilance to defend the claims of the workers, to demand equal pay for equal work, to protect the dependents of soldiers and sailors.

The Woman's Dreadnought, the working woman's suffrage paper, is the organ of the E.L.F.S., published weekly at ½d.

We wish the East London Suffragettes great success in their splendid and unselfish work.

MATILDA AND MARCUS. By Mary Richardson (Simpkin, Marshall, etc., 6/-). A first novel by so well-known a Suffragette as Miss Richardson is an interesting event. The writer, we are told, though finding the world out of joint, firmly believes that a new day approaches, wherein, needless to say, women will play a big part, though this does not particularly appear from the story itself. Miss Richardson deals with characters pleasant and unpleasant. The famous nerve specialist, diagnosing woman as an interesting specimen, is recognizable; the cold calculating creed of the Christian minister is a travesty of his Master's teaching, but that the author would be the first to admit. We do not feel that the nebulous idealism of Matilda (why did she fall into the arms of Sir Henry?) will carry the world far, but there are many well-meaning idealists abroad to-day, whom, though rudderless, may God bring safe to port.

ALLEGED EXCESSIVE DRINKING AMONG WOMEN. Writing in the Catholic press with reference to the alleged excessive drinking among women, Mr. Leslie Toke says:—"I am not concerned with the results of their investigation, nor with the causes alleged, save to remind your readers that as to both there is divergent testimony which should not be ignored. It is when we come to the proposed remedies that protest is necessary. The first, 'reducing the number of public houses,' calls for no comment, other than pointing out that some competent students consider this rather a cause of the excessive drinking than a remedy. But the second, 'some form of compulsory saving, either by controlling the payment of war allowances (partial payment in securities or bonds, for example), or by a system of house-to-house collections,' is an amazing example of class effrontery! Just think what it means. What is admitted on all sides to be a *small minority* of the women of the wage-earning classes, is found to be spending a larger proportion of their income upon intoxicants than seems right to the ladies of the C.W.L. Therefore, *all* the wives of our soldiers are to be subjected to insult and robbery in one of two ways: (1) either the money, due to them by the nation's contract with their husbands, is to be taken from them by some official, as a loan to the Government, without their consent being asked for, or (2) another horde of 'inspectors' (voluntary middle-class busy-bodies, for the most part) is to be let loose on the homes of the poor, with the power to demand from each housewife some portion of her weekly income. And these monstrous proposals, . . . emanate from a body of Catholic women! When Catholics begin to work on these lines, the Servile State is coming near indeed."

C.W.S.S. Literature.

Leaflets:

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