

THE WOMAN'S SIGNAL, JANUARY 7, 1897.

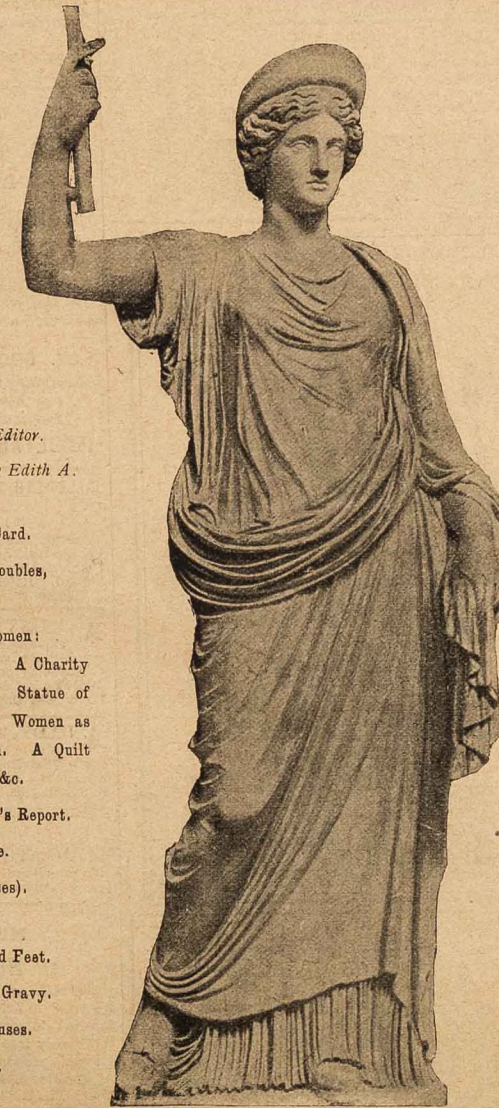
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THE WOMAN'S SIGNAL
A Weekly Record and Review devoted to the interests of Women in the Home and in the Wider World.
Edited by **MRS. FENWICK MILLER.**

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THE WOMAN'S SIGNAL

A WEEKLY RECORD AND REVIEW FOR LADIES.

Vol. VII., No. 158.] JANUARY 7, 1897. One Penny Weekly.

A BOOK OF THE HOUR.

A SON AND HIS MOTHER.*
This engaging book is what the French call "intime." Mr. Barrie tells us (and truly) that the Scot is by nature terribly reserved; unless you can penetrate into his home circle, you cannot really know him. "In his office, in clubs, at social gatherings, where you and he seem to be getting on so well, he is really a house with all the shutters closed and the door locked." This is not so of malice prepense, it is often against his will that he is "opaque;" in Mr. Barrie's own case, he avers, it is his constant effort to "keep my shutters open and my foot in the door, but they will bang to." His mother, he assures us, was as reticent as himself, "and my sister was the most reserved of us all; you might at times see a light through one of my chinks; she was double-shuttered." Well! now it is this reserved, self-conscious, privacy-seeking man who has flung wide his doors, and invites all the world to wander, not only through the reception rooms, but the bed-chambers, the kitchens, the most hidden-away cupboards! This sort of accident often happens when a man does violence to the "vraie vérité" of his character. The proud forcing himself to humility is over-familiar; the stiff and serious, who would be counted genial, becomes excessive in jocularly; and so forth. Hence we need not wonder over-much that, when the reserved man throws open his soul, he does not realise the necessity of keeping any of its chambers sacred.

Not that it matters to us! We women shall enter in and wander through with a sympathy and a courtesy and a delight that leave him secure in our respect and our affection. But in this world there are many not worthy to read such a chapter as "I became her Maid of all Work," or as the descriptions, so detailed and touching, of those last flashes of life's slowly extinguishing flame.

They were Scotch working people, born to toil and hardship. Margaret Ogilvy (for, in accordance with the good Scotch custom, Mr. Barrie calls his mother by her maiden name herself began to labour at too early an age.

"The daughter of a stonemason, she was eight when her mother's death made her mistress of the house and mother to her little brother, and from that time she scrubbed and mended and baked and sewed, and argued with the fletcher about the quarter pound of beef and penny bone which provided dinner for two days (but if you think that this was poverty you don't know the meaning of the word), and she carried the water from the pump, and had her washing-days and her ironings, and a stocking always on the wire for odd moments, and gossiped like a matron with the other women, and humoured the men with a tolerant smile—all these things she did as a matter of course, leaping joyful from bed in the morning, because there was so much to do."

Marriage brought her no respite from toil, but a family to care for, and delicate health came with the rapidly following births of ten children.

* Margaret Ogilvy, by her son, J. M. Barrie.

"I see her bending over the cradle of her first-born, college for him already in her eye (and my father not less ambitious); and anon it is a girl who is in the cradle, and then another girl—already a tragic figure to those who know the end. I wonder if any instinct told my mother that the great day of her life was when she bore this child; what I am sure of is that from the first the child followed her with the most wistful eyes, and saw how she needed help, and longed to rise and give it. For of physical strength my mother had never very much; it was her spirit that got through the work, and in those days she was often so ill that the sand rained on the doctor's window, and men ran to and fro with leeches, and 'she is in life, we can say no more,' was the information."

It shows a beautiful fibre in Mr. Barrie's nature that, even in the midst of this glorification of his own sonly relationship to his mother, he recognises and emphasises the fact that her daughter was yet more than her son. This daughter, the third child of "Margaret Ogilvy," was the devoted and unchanging companion of the mother. "I'll never leave you, mother," the daughter would cry. "Fine I know you'll never leave me!" the happy mother would answer. So it had always been expected that this constant and loving companionship would last till the mother was taken away. "I hoped I should be with her at the end," says the son, "not as the one she looked on last, but as him from whom she would turn to look upon her best beloved; not my arm, but my sister's should be round her when she died; not my hand, but my sister's should close her eyes." But, as it turned out, the loving daughter, "dying on her feet for months," so as to tend her mother to the last, sank down suddenly, and was obliged to let herself be carried, dying, out of her still living mother's bed. But (tragic yet kindly fate) that mother was then so childish, and her active mind had so faded away, that she did not even know that her tenderest, most loving child had gone before her. The twain, not divided in death, departed within three days of each other, and "were buried together on my mother's seventy-sixth birthday."

But in between those two scenes—the eight year old housekeeper, springing from her bed because there was so much to do, and the old woman of seventy-six dying at practically the same moment as her best-beloved darling—there is much that is bright, much that is touching, to relate. It is all homely, all the "simple annals of the poor," but interesting because so frank, so "intime."

Somehow, the son was sent to college; he became an M.A. of a Scotch University, and his mother longed to see him a minister. But literary fame was for him the one attractive vision. He longed to go to London, to see literary men, to win a place for himself.

"Not less than mine became her desire that I should have my way—but, ah, the iron seats in that park of horrible repute, and that bare room at the top of many flights of stairs! While I was away at college she drained all available libraries for books about those who go

to London to live by the pen, and they all told the same shuddering tale. London, which she never saw, was to her a monster that licked up country youths as they stepped from the train; there were the garrets in which they sat abject, and the park seats where they passed the night. Those park seats were the monster's glaring eyes to her, and as I go by them now she is nearer to me than when I am in any other part of London. I daresay that when night comes, this Hyde Park, which is so gay by day, is haunted by the ghosts of many mothers, who run, wild-eyed, from seat to seat, looking for their sons. . . . 'If you could only be sure of as much as would keep body and soul together,' my mother would say with a sigh."

Then comes the story of the early failures and the first successes—the familiar tale! The surprise was great when it was found that an editor liked the homely Scotch sketches, and would have no others; so followed the hunting in the mother's memory for her local legends and character sketches; and finally the journalistic engagement that brought in a good income, and then the first book. Yet, even while his name was growing in men's ears, the ambitious author would turn (with the devotion and self-abnegation of a woman) from his cherished work to far humbler avocations, to give his mother daily comfort and help:—

"And sometimes I was her maid of all work. 'It is early morn, and my mother has come noiselessly into my room. I know it is she, though my eyes are shut, and I am only half awake. Perhaps I was dreaming of her, for I accept her presence without surprise, as if in the awakening I had but seen her go out at one door to come in at another. But she is speaking to herself.

"I'm sweer to waken him—I doubt he was working late—oh, that weary writing—no, I maunna waken him."
"I start up. She is wringing her hands. 'What is wrong?' I cry, but I know before she answers. My sister is down with one of the headaches against which even she cannot fight, and my mother, who bears physical pain as if it were a comrade, is most woebegone when her daughter is the sufferer. 'And she winna let me go down the stair to make a cup of tea for her,' she groans.

"I will soon make the tea, mother."
"Will you?" she says eagerly. It is what she has come to me for, but 'It is a pity to rouse you,' she says.
"And I will take charge of the house to-day, and light the fires and wash the dishes—"
"Na, oh no; no, I couldna ask that of you, and you an author."

"It won't be the first time, mother, since I was an author."
"More like the fiftieth!" she says almost gleefully, so I have begun well, for to keep up her spirits is the great thing to-day.

"Knock at the door. It is the baker. I take in the bread, looking so sternly at him that he dare not smile.
"Knock at the door. It is the postman. (I hope he did not see that I had the lid of the kettle in my other hand.)
"Furious knocking in a remote part. This means that the author is in the coal cellar.
"Anon I carry two breakfasts upstairs in triumph.

"Now that I have washed up the breakfast things I should be at my writing, and I am anxious to be at it, as I have an idea in my head, which, if it is of any value, has almost

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certainly been put there by her. But dare I venture? I know that the house has not been properly set going yet; there are beds to make, the exterior of the teapot is fair, but suppose someone were to look inside? What a pity I knocked over the flour barrel! Can I hope that for once my mother will forget to inquire into these matters? Is my sister willing to let disorder reign until to-morrow? I determine to risk it. Perhaps I have been at work for half an hour when I hear movements overhead. One or other of them is wondering why the house is so quiet. I rattle the tongs, but even this does not satisfy them, so back into the desk go my papers, and now what you hear is not the scrape of a pen, but the rinsing of pots and pans, or I am making beds, and making them thoroughly, because after I am gone my mother will come (I know her) and look suspiciously beneath the coverlet.

"The kitchen is now speckless, not an unwashed platter in sight, unless you look beneath the table. I feel that I have earned time for an hour's writing at last, and at it I go with vigour. . . . The small fry must e'en to their task, moan the dog as he may. So I have yoked to mine when enter my mother, looking wistful.

"I suppose you are terrible thrang," she says.

"Well, I am rather busy; but what is it you want me to do?"

"It would be a shame to ask you."

"Still, ask me."

"I am so terrified they may be filed."

"You want me to—?"

"If you would just come up and help me to fold the sheets."

"The sheets are folded and I return to Albert. I lock the door, and at last I am bringing my hero forward nicely (my knee in the small of his back), when this startling question is shot by my sister through the key-hole:—

"Where did you put the carrot-grater?"

"It will all have to be done over again if I let Albert go for a moment, so, gripping him hard, I shout indignantly that I have not seen that carrot-grater."

"Then what did you grate the carrots on?" asks the voice, and the door-handle is shaken just as I shake Albert.

"On a broken cup," I reply, with surprising readiness, and I get to work again, but am less engrossed, for a conviction grows on me that I put the carrot-grater in the drawer of the sewing-machine.

"I am wondering whether I should confess or brazen it out, when I hear my sister going hurriedly upstairs. I have a presentiment that she has gone to talk about me, and I basely open my door and listen.

"Just look at that, mother!"

"Is it a dish-cloth?"

"That's what it is now."

"Losh behears; it's one of the new table napkins."

"That's what it was. He has been polishing the kitchen grate with it."

"(I remember!)"

"Woe's me! That is what comes of his not letting me budge from this room. Oh, it is a watery Sabbath when men take to doing women's work."

"It defies the face of clay, mother, to fathom what makes him so senseless."

"Oh, it's that weary writing."

"And the worst of it is he will talk to-morrow as if he had done wonders."

"That's the way with the whole clanjam-fray of them."

"Yes, but as usual you will humour him, mother."

"Oh, well, it pleases him, you see," says my mother, "and we can have our laugh when his door's shut."

"He is most terribly handless."

"He is all that, but, poor soul, he does his best."

Surely after this he is entitled to add, "Everything I could do for her in this life I have done since I was a boy; I look back through the years and I cannot see the smallest thing left undone."

Happy the son who can believe this! Happy the mother who has had a son who could even desire to believe that he is entitled to take this credit to his orphaned heart!

THE FUTURE OF WOMEN WHO WORK.

By EDITH A. BARNETT.

I.—SHOULD THEY SAVE?

THOSE of us who think at all seriously about the economical questions of the day—and I suppose that wide generalisation may be taken to include all readers of the WOMAN'S SIGNAL—must often feel anxious forebodings when we are driven to wonder, or try to prophesy, what is to become twenty years hence of the immense number of women who now work for their bread. These working women of the educated classes are a new appearance on the field of economics, so new that we have not yet had time to observe the fate of a generation of worn-out workers. Most of the workers are young, or, at any rate, youngish; and the few who are not even that have the pluck and energy that is commonly supposed to belong only to youth, and so are able to forget how the years fly, to forget how soon the time comes when even the most energetic must submit to do half work, in preparation for being laid on the shelf altogether.

In no century has the power of work been accorded to the average individual to the end of the average life. We read of a custom in Eastern lands whereby men, after they had done their share of the world's work, and founded a family, retired to solitary places, to spend their remaining years in meditation and contemplation. It is not a custom that fits in easily to Western modes of thought. And yet, in point of fact, it does fit exactly with Western as with Eastern necessities of existence. The length of life has been increased of late, so that we all have more years to dispose of than were given to the average grandmother. Yet, on every side, we hear continual complaints that this world is given over to, or taken possession of by, the young. And those of us who have any experience of workers seeking work will agree with me that it is every year more difficult to find anything to do for a woman the wrong side of forty. Anything to do? Of course, much of the best work is done by women of that or an older age, and could scarcely be done by women of less experience. I am thinking rather of something to do whereby a salary may be earned, and I think that employers are yearly becoming more shy of engaging a woman who is past her first youth. They would rather have somebody a little too young than a little too old. Youth is a fault that inevitably mends itself, and where a worker is to be appointed to any permanent position, it is the common thing to advertise for someone under forty, employers rightly preferring the chance of crudeness during a year or two to the certainty of growing incapacity fifteen or even five years hence. It is a difficult subject to handle; for, feeling all the sympathy one may, a sound of cruelty may hardly be avoided, and yet women must feel that after forty, or after fifty, if they choose to fix their date later than the world does, they do not feel up to the amount of work, or to the endurance of hardship, or to the willing and obedient service, which came so easy in time gone by. Even in domestic service, that least overcrowded of all professions, work is not readily to be had in middle life, and, even if the

work were there, the capacity to do it well would often be wanting.

Yet all this is a sort of preface, and I am nowise inclined to insist upon any acceptance for my precise views. We shall be agreed about the one point I care to insist upon, which is that all the women who are now working will, ten, twenty, twenty-five years hence, be past work or past earning, but that they will not be past living, or the need for means of livelihood. What are they going to live on? Have the bulk of women who work any prospect of any means of livelihood in old age, or even in later middle life?

My experience goes to prove that the bulk of women workers put little or nothing by. Of course there are some women of independent means who work for pleasure, and take their salaries only because they will not injure their sisters by refusing to work for money. But these, though they figure large in the popular imagination, are not very numerous. You may hear frequently of a girl who "works though she is not obliged to," and if you look into the matter you will find that she has perhaps £20 a year and a friend who will willingly give her housework while she is young, and strong, and useful; or you may find that she has only stepped a little in front of her obligation, and that knowing she must work when the home is broken up, has chosen to do so already instead of sharing the family means for a few years. The women, few or many, who work, yet whose fortune is provided for by their possession of a certain income, may be swept out of our consideration. I only ask that you should not call that an adequate provision which is much less than they are accustomed to live upon now, just a few pounds a year which would keep them outside of the workhouse, but which would force them, just when old age demanded comfort, to forego all the luxuries and even the comforts that they have enjoyed while they were young and strong.

Young people are apt to believe that when they have lost the pleasures of youth they must be altogether miserable, so that it will not make much difference if poverty be added to their other troubles, whereas now they could enjoy so much, they might be so happy if only they could buy outside the limits of their incomes. But we who have come to that time of life when we are not so young as we were, or who have kept our eyes open and watched the ways of our seniors, know well that middle life holds many pleasures unknown to youth, and that old age may be a most happy stage in existence, if only there be no cause for daily worry. Nothing kills off people past the prime of life like worry, and of all causes of worry poverty, or the fear of extreme poverty, is the commonest, and while young people are often the better in body and mind for a spell of "roughing it," old folk are greatly the better for comfort and even for a little luxury of living, for plenty of warmth, for the best of food, though it may be in small quantity, for rest, fresh air, and sunshine.

They need work too, do the old folks. Few sights are more pitiable than an old woman whose care and help is nowhere needed. I do not think any woman worth her salt looks forward to folding her hands idle any time this side of death, when others will fold them for her. But work for the old does not mean a livelihood, and I do not wish to wander off into dissertations upon work, but rather to face things as they are, and to point out that past middle life there are few things a woman can do whereby she may earn bread and cheese and a roof over her head. We pride ourselves on

the great gain to health since women have taken to working and to playing hard. But added health, if it means anything, means added life; and therefore many of the working sisterhood should look forward to exceeding, as they surely will, their threescore years and ten. And a woman often feels and seems quite young at turned sixty, nowadays. Well, twenty years hence there will be thousands of educated women of the working classes getting near the sixties. What are they going to live upon, and who is going to keep them out of the workhouse?

I take it as certain that a large number will not be able to keep themselves. They will not be able to find employment, and they have not put anything by. They say they cannot save, which is a point that I may discuss presently. What I want to discuss first is the amount of money that must be spent to keep these working women "outside the workhouse" in anything resembling the way that they are now accustomed to live. It is a thorny matter to handle; for a few are afraid of putting the figure too high, and many are afraid to put it too low. Some think it is grand to pretend to spend more than they do; and some are so ignorant that they do not know what they do spend; and some, having no turn for arithmetic, never clearly convince themselves that (by anything more immovable than a usual assumption) two and two make four.

Not long ago, at a meeting of women—middle-class and not very wealthy women—we fell upon discussion of the cost of bare food for a couple of ladies who were to occupy themselves in chicken farming. Someone said that seven shillings a week apiece would feed them; but at that there was an outcry; and, finally, not to seem mean, it was agreed (on paper) to allow ten shillings a week apiece for food and extras, the extras not being, so far as my memory serves me, very strictly defined. I pass over the question whether you can ever keep chickens at a profit if you have to employ a woman who, in consequence of some accident of birth or upbringing, needs double the money to feed her that would be demanded by a competent henwife, whose want of grammar and whose (possibly) coarse manners would do no harm to the fowls. We also are reckoning only on paper, and may as well take ten shillings as another sum as a basis of calculation. Ten shillings a week means £26 a year. We added thereto £14 for clothes, though, again, some thought it a mean sum; house-rent £20 = 8s. a week; and for coals, lights, furniture, washing and the rest, £10 or £15. We reached the grand total of £70 or £75, and yet we had reckoned nothing for books, journeys, doctors, dentists, and such like. We pulled up short, astonished at the inexorableness of household arithmetic. For we knew that £70 or £75 is good wages for many a skilled worker, more than we, many of us, pay to the women who teach our children, much more than we need offer to bring us shoals of applications if we were to advertise for almost any kind of work that women do. Poor things! How on earth do they live? was the next question—one, I think, that it is extremely wholesome to ask and to answer. If every woman would reckon on a piece of paper the cost of bare living, according to her own standard, be that what it may, and would compare with it the salaries that she pays with an unseared conscience to other women, I think perhaps we should get nearer the solution of the woman question than by oceans of tall talk or volumes of smart writing. For the woman question and the wages question are more closely bound together than most folks

(outside the WOMAN'S SIGNAL) care to acknowledge.

Certainly £75 a year is vastly in excess of the earnings of the average man, much more of the average woman, if you take the whole world over. And, though that is less easy to prove, most persons will agree with me when I say that it is much in excess of the average wage of the educated woman worker during the best years of her life. And it is not much to live upon during these best years, but what is it to live on in old age, and how many will have as much? When I forecast the future of my working friends I am shocked to know that out of a very large number only here and there one is assured of even £75 a year in old age. And only here and there one could be comfortable within an income of £75 or even of £100.

To be sure I have just lost an old friend who lived to a great age on £25 a year and a few presents, and she was one of the most contented old women I have ever known. But she belonged to a bygone generation; and in any generation she would have been the exception who proves the rule, that the majority of educated women have been brought up in tastes that cannot be cramped within a small income. And even among the working sisterhood there are some who think it grand to spend money whether they have it or not.

Among my friends there are some who earn more, and a few very much more, than the £75 that I have somehow fallen upon as a basis of discussion. But the point is that what they earn they spend. The richer and the poorer alike put nothing by; and they have two unvarying answers to all expositions. Some say they mean to "die in harness." And those who are touched with a happy-go-lucky spirit hope that "something will turn up." And they will not face the plain fact that when we are past work, the money we own plus the money we have saved is what we shall have to live upon—unless we choose rather to live upon our relations, or our friends, or on the public money, doled out in charity, or from the rates.

(To be continued.)

NEW YEAR'S CARD.

By MRS. PRISCILLA BRIGHT MCLAREN.

ANOTHER year of travel o'er,
Which brings me nearer to the shore,
But let me greet my friends once more
At Christmas-tide.

Some dear ones have been called above,
They need no more our earthly love;
May we like them as faithful prove
To service left,

And count no service small or mean;
No work has ever crowned been,
But there was first some lowly scene
Of toil and pain.

Who to Christ's law of love are true,
Blessing receive like Heavenly dew;
May such rich blessing fall on you
In each New Year.

Newington House, Edinburgh,
1896-97.

We notice that Sir Henry E. Roscoe, F.R.S., D.C.L., has accepted the post of English adviser of the scientific department of Liebig's Extract of Meat Company, Limited—a further guarantee, if one were needed, of the unique excellence of the preparations of this old-established company.

TREASURES AND TROUBLES.

A DOMESTIC SCIENCE STORY FOR YOUNG MOTHERS.

(Sequel to *Solicitudes*.)

CHAPTER I.

"Can we set any blessing this side heaven
Against their love for us—the light that shows
All other joy, the light whereby it grows?
Yes, one boon richer than that love is given—
The right to love them!"

WESTLAND MARSTON.

Is there any other event in the whole range of human sympathies so interesting as the advent of a baby into a home which has hitherto been childless? However peaceful, however pleasant, the course of daily life in such a home may have been, something has been wanting. There have been advantages, no doubt. The chairs have kept their places, the carpets have not been spotted, the backs of the books remained ranged in perfect order, there were no finger-marks on doors or furniture. Without children, your days may pass in peace. There is no noise when you want to be quiet. There are no perpetual appeals for your assistance in such various capacities as surgeon to operate on a splinter or a scratch, judge to pacify quarrels, novelist to spin out endless stories, playmate to be lively, and comforter to soothe. There are no little garments to be mended, no dolls to be dressed, no wheelbarrows or dolls' chairs to be carpentered; no coughs or teething, or headaches or stomach-aches, to be worried about. Dear me, what a nice comfortable thing it must be to be a married lady without a family!

But so singularly constituted is woman's nature that we rarely appreciate the blessings of such a lot. Sooner or later, according to the natural dower of maternal instincts, there comes a longing to hear little voices and the patter of small feet; to feel the clinging of tiny arms and the pressure of sweet, small lips; to see the face of one, who thinks more of you than of all the world, brighten at your approach; to know there is some little being in existence to whom you are the nearest and dearest—the source of authority and the fountain of joy—the earthly representative of Providence; and on whom you can lavish all the love that your heart can produce.

But it would be idle to deny, in the first place, that mothers have much to pay for the privilege of motherhood; and in the second place, that the cares and responsibilities, which accompany that privilege, are no light burden to bear. The physical, mental, and moral development of the young life, all depend upon the wisdom and judgment of the parents' action, and especially upon that of the mother.

We all know how lightly and thoughtlessly these duties and responsibilities are often undertaken. If a girl in her teens were invited to drive a little steam engine, without being in the least acquainted with its mechanism, or with the proper method of managing it, the probability is—the certainty is, if she had any common sense—that she would declare "she could not possibly" without being taught; but the very same girl will unhesitatingly take charge of the well-being of the far more delicate human machinery of an infant's frame.

Loving her child passionately, feeling ready to give her very existence for its safety and comfort, the young mother will yet often, from sheer ignorance, stuff it with unsuitable food, dose it with mischievous medicines, clothe it too lightly, insufficiently, or excessively, and altogether play such havoc with it as to be the

direct cause why the life of the child is either prematurely ended or is made a burden heavy to be borne through years of childhood and maturity.

The supposition that the mere affection of the mother for her child can teach her how to manage it is as mistaken as would be the idea that the interest which a shipwrecked person in a boat would have in reaching the nearest land, would, in itself, suffice to take him to that land without the aid of a chart or the knowledge of a compass. Indeed, it is sometimes the very devotion and over-anxious care of the mother which lead to mischievous errors in management.

It does not much matter whether there be wealth, with all the appliances of luxury, or whether there be comparative poverty, for the child's upbringing in health and happiness. Provided the necessities of life can be had—sufficient food (and food for an infant means milk), suitable clothing, and a fairly healthy dwelling, which can be well warmed and ventilated—beyond these essentials, all depends upon the degree of knowledge and wisdom possessed by those who have the care of children.

Mrs. Crofton, the wife of the wealthy stockbroker, had in her luxurious London home every appliance that wealth could give to ensure her health, and to give her first baby a warm reception and welcome. Yet she herself was not so well in health as her sister, Mrs. Wynter, the wife of the struggling young doctor, in that prosperous great town, Restingham, and had an impartial observer looked into the two homes, and seen how the two babies were prepared for, he would already have anticipated that the child of the more wealthy parents was less likely to have a strong constitution, and to be wisely managed, than the one whose parents had anxieties and difficulties to contend with, but who had also earnestness and knowledge to help them on in their task.

Mrs. Crofton's husband, a man who loved society and display, had not taken the full warning which he should have done from a serious illness which his wife had suffered within the first year of their married life. He had accepted the lesson as far as he saw it, but he had not seen that his wife required comparative rest and freedom from excitement.

He required her to go out with him to a continual succession of "at homes" and balls. He liked to know that she had been seen at fashionable morning fetes. Nothing delighted him more than to see a description of her dress in a society journal, or even to read that "amongst those present" at a garden party, a Richmond breakfast, a celebrated wedding, a private view, or a botanical promenade, "was Mrs. Hugh Crofton, whose costume was much admired."

All this implied for Mrs. Crofton exertions and fatigues over and above the mere going out. Consultations with dressmakers, shopping expeditions, and repeated changes of attire were essential elements in a life which was a round of formal pleasures that might more aptly have been called labours. No course of business life can be so monotonous, so empty, so useless, and therefore so tedious and wearing, as is the unceasing toil of a woman who struggles to be fashionably famous; and, certainly, even the wash-tub is as favourable to vigorous health as such a manner of living.

Elfie Crofton had no great liking for the kind of life she led. But, once entangled in it, by her husband's action and wish, it soon became impossible for her to escape from it. The consequence was that she was always undergoing

that fatigue without exercise which is implied in fashionable dressing and fashionable society; or else she was vainly endeavouring, by rest upon a couch, to gather up those energies which were dissipated in the fruitless labours of the rest of her day.

Many things she suffered; and the doctor became almost a regular morning-visitant to her. Well did the doctor know that, for her health's sake, she should have gone quite away from her fashionable friends to some quiet spot in the country; but equally well did he know that it would not do for him to make this his only prescription. He had recommended it, but only to be told that it was not possible. Accordingly he prescribed pills and potions for ailments and symptoms, which he knew well he might alleviate, but could never cure unless he were allowed to prescribe also a more rational course of life.

So the weeks drifted by, and Mrs. Crofton became more and more ill with their progress, until the London season had ended and she was at liberty to seek fresh air, when it was too late to save her from enervation, the consequence of over-exertion in "society."

CHAPTER II.

"DEAREST Bertha, I am so delighted to see you; and this is your dear baby! How do you feel after the journey?"

"Pretty well, thank you, love. Baby has slept most of the way."

Mrs. Crofton led her guest upstairs to a small suite of three rooms, which she had had the pleasure of fitting up for a lengthened visit from her best-loved sister.

The place was Elm Lodge, the small country house of Mr. and Mrs. Crofton—small, that is to say, compared with the noble mansion in South Kensington, which was their London home.

Mrs. Wynter had not had a very long journey with her six months' old baby. Dr. Wynter's practice was in a large Midland town, and Mr. Crofton's country house was pleasantly situated in a rural district of the same county.

The doctor's young wife was not very robust; and when she had received an entreaty from her sister, Mrs. Crofton, that she would come to stay for a time at Elm Lodge, bringing her baby with her, it was felt by her husband even more strongly than by herself that she ought not to refuse the opportunity of obtaining a brief rest from her household cares, and a change from the close air of Restingham.

So Elfie Crofton was to have the advantage of the presence of the sister, who was not only older than herself by three years of time, but much older still in experience, and in that knowledge which is the science of daily life.

Bertha, on her part, had been able to leave her home in peace, because the motherly wife of her husband's partner, Mr. Burton, which old lady was the great refuge of Mrs. Wynter in all her perplexities, had arranged to partly receive Dr. Wynter into her home during his wife's absence.

Luxury was now unknown in the ordinary existence of the hard-worked doctor's wife, although the two sisters had been brought up in equal comfort. It was, therefore, with the pleasure that only those can know whose taste is cultivated beyond their present means of living, that Bertha Wynter entered the charming bedroom that her sister had prepared for her inhabitation.

(To be continued.)

Current News
FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

There is still sad news from India. No less than 670,000 poor creatures are now daily depending for life on the scant wage of the public relief works. Still, the official telegram only says that the distress through famine is expected to be acute in four districts and less acute in nine others. The Secretary of State for India informs the Lord Mayor of London that the Government do not yet consider a relief fund raised by public subscription to be desirable; but the *Calcutta Englishman* publishes a powerful letter from Mr. J. P. Goodridge, late Divisional Judge at Jabalpur, concerning the state of the central provinces, where famine exists in an acute form, and, according to Mr. Goodridge, thousands are dying daily. He says that as early as the month of September the mortality rate in the Jabalpur district was 97, in Sangor 98, in Damoli 138, and in Silrota 225; whereas during the severe famine of 1837-38 the rate for the whole province did not exceed 95. Mr. Goodridge declares that the famine has got beyond control, and that the arrangements made by the Government are inadequate to cope with it. He urges the opening of public subscriptions.

Mr. Gladstone has celebrated his 87th birthday. Mr. Gladstone, in an interesting letter upon book collecting, which was published last week, stated that the volume which had been longest in his possession was the "Sacred Dramas" of Hannah More. This book, he said, was presented to him by the authoress 81 years ago, when he was only six years old.

Several persons were prosecuted at Cardiff police court for selling beer by retail without a license. One defendant, charged with illegally selling beer in Broadway Liberal Club, was fined £50, and it was stated on the authority of the head constable that the practice of taking liquor to drink away from the clubs prevailed to an enormous extent in Cardiff.

Miss Laura Braithwaite is the treasurer and almoner of a unique and truly benevolent society in Leeds called "The Unmarried Woman's Benevolent Institution." Describing some of her Christmas visits, she says:—"I found another couple of sisters, curiously alike, something like the Brothers Cheeryble—one is eighty, and the other rather younger. They have both been governesses, but only one is a pensioner. They were without fire, but cheerfully said they would have one at night. They spoke so brightly of the comfort and blessing which the small certain income ensured. I left, leaving money for Christmas dinner, also some food, and the promise of half a load of coal. The next case was one which last year touched your readers so much—namely, that of the two old ladies who were trying to persuade themselves they had a fire by putting red tissue paper in the grate. I had been beforehand with the coals this year, and I found them sitting by a bright little coal fire, clothed in some of the warm garments my friends have made for them, and they were happy. It was a miserable day outside, but they said 'the sun will shine for many a long day, thanks to the generosity we have experienced.' I have just been to see poor Miss E. She is drawing very near the end of life, but she told me that she lies awake the greater part of the night, thinking how many blessings she has. Thanks to Mr. Dalton, who gave a noble donation of £25, none of our pensioners will be without coals. I have been very much struck by the terrible need of many of the disappointed candidates, and when I look at the long list of new applicants my heart rather fails me. In spite of the fog I have paid more than a hundred visits, and many more than a hundred hearts have been made glad. The warm clothes made by the Guild have also brought untold comfort to our pensioners, for they have hardly ever any spare money to fill up the gaps in their wardrobe. I feel as if it was hardly right that I should be the only one to hear the words of gratitude."

Miss Winter, the English governess who has for so many years had charge of Wilhelmina, the young Queen of Holland, has now returned to her home in England, pensioned for life with £500 per annum. She has also been loaded with presents by both the Queen and her mother.

The latest edition of the "Widow's Mite." The managers of the Borough of Tynemouth Poor Children's Holiday Agency beg to acknowledge the sum of 16s., "being an expression of sympathy on the part of the women employed at Messrs. Cookson's Lead Works."

Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher, widow of the famous preacher, fell to the floor on Saturday week at her residence at Stamford, Connecticut, and broke her hip. Mrs. Beecher, it is feared, will never be able to walk again. Her life is in no immediate danger. She is 84 years of age.

Footballers, amidst their rough and violent excitement, still admit the softening influence of women by opening their gates free to ladies. A correspondent writes to the *Shields Daily News*:—"Permit me as one of the fair sex to call attention to the Rockcliff and Percy Park match at Whitley on Saturday. Not regarding the merits of the game, but the charge for admission of ladies. On going through their turnstiles I was ruthlessly hauled up to pay sixpence for admission to the field, an unheard of thing amongst the other clubs of Northumberland or Durham. The game of football is such as needs the presence of a refining influence, and if Rockcliff or any other club continues this policy of forcing ladies to pay for admission to the ground, then I hope all ladies will meet such imposts by calling on their friends to ignore the matches of any club who adopt this suicidal policy."

The fine group of Queen Boadicea, offered by Mr. John Thornycroft, son of the sculptor, the late Mr. Thomas Thornycroft, to the County Council, is apparently regarded by that body as something in the nature of a white elephant. It seems that the casting of the group would, it was said, cost about £8,000. Careful inquiries reduced the probable cost to £1,995; but the solicitor to the Council, upon being consulted, informed that body that it had no legal power to spend a penny on any such purpose. Mr. Bull, having already obtained promises of private support to the extent of nearly half the sum, does not care to let the matter fall through, and it is now proposed to provide against this and possible future difficulties of a like kind, by endeavouring to get a Bill passed empowering the Council to

"purchase, or contribute towards the cost of purchasing, or otherwise incur expenditure in connection with the provision and erection of works of art in the County of London." As this statue of the Warrior Queen would commemorate one of our British heroines, it is a pity it should not be set up.

Mrs. Keogh, who has been attached to the nursing staff of Guy's Hospital for more than thirty years, twenty-five of which have been spent continuously on night duty in the surgery, is about to retire, having been granted a pension by the hospital authorities. Mrs. Keogh, familiarly known among generations of Guy's men as "Auntie," has been for many years looked upon as part and parcel of the institution, and her experience and memories of the hospital are probably unique. The medical officer on duty as "take-in" has had many occasions to thank Mrs. Keogh for his rest being undisturbed, as the lady was quite able to attend to most cases without his assistance. An influential committee has been formed for the purpose of presenting the veteran nurse with a fitting testimonial.

During the past few days a cycling club has been formed at Guy's Hospital for the lady nurses engaged at that establishment, and up to Saturday, when the first run took place, no less than sixty members had been enrolled. The club is the first of its kind in London, and it is the intention of the founders to endeavour to secure the co-operation of the nursing staffs in other London hospitals and institutions. A cottage has been secured at Lewisham, containing ample storing room for bicycles, as well as a large tea-room and dressing-room for members. Certain other rooms are given up to the caretakers, who provide tea to members at a fixed tariff. At the present time the club possesses several good machines for the use of the members, which have been subscribed for by friends, among whom are Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, M.P., and Mrs. Cosmo Bonsor. The president of the club is Mrs. Hale White, and the secretary, Sister Minnie.

"The need of assistance from saleswomen in buying certain lines of goods is recognised by all merchants," says the Chicago Dry Goods Reporter. "Women are peculiarly fitted to select certain goods for the trade. In matters pertaining to the dress and adornment of her sex woman is by nature and education gifted with more intelligence than man. That this superior endowment gives her qualifications for buying which a man does not and cannot possess follows logically. That the merchant cannot afford to overlook or undervalue the peculiar abilities of the woman buyer, and that he should give them

the fullest exercise possible, is more strongly realised now than ever before. Some of the largest stores in the country place the buying for certain departments entirely in the hands of the women who manage those departments, and their success in buying has justified the confidence reposed in them. These women are in constant touch with their customers, due to the fact that they are head saleswomen of their departments and know every feminine whim to be gratified. Their judgment in selecting goods is intuitive, and the men for whom they buy and of whom they buy are willing witnesses to their success as buyers."

Mrs. John D. Townsend is making efforts to secure a Curfew ordinance for children in New York City. She has been collecting statistics of youthful crime, and since last January has found highway robbery at six years, murder at seven years, and incendiarism at 12. "Not wickedness," says Mrs. Townsend, "but awful precocity and parental irresponsibility are causes of a great amount of youthful crime." That this is true of England also is borne out by the fact that in Christmas week two boys of only 14 were charged with being drunk and disorderly in the street.

A girl, 14 years of age, named Lizzie McGough, has been arrested in Carlisle on the charge of shop-breaking. On Saturday night she confessed that she broke into the establishment of the Misses Williams, in the Green Market, by surmounting a wall 5 ft. high at the rear of the premises, then descending into the back yard, removing some bricks from over the top of the coalhouse door, pulling back the bolt of the door, and then finding an entrance through to open the back door. She stole some goods, which she pawned, and in that way her arrest was effected.

The Gilchrist Travelling Studentship for Women Teachers has just been awarded for 1896 to Miss M. Brebner, M.A., who intends visiting German schools next spring for the purpose of reporting on the methods employed in those schools in teaching modern languages. The Gilchrist Scholarship for the Cambridge Training College for 1896-97 has been awarded to Miss M. Agnes Howard, late of the Brighton High School, and of Girton College.

A quilt knitted by the Queen is included in a gift of clothing from the Ladies' Guild reported by the master at the fortnightly meeting of the Isle of Wight Guardians. The quilt is designed for the women's ward of the infirmary. It was exhibited on a screen in the board room. The chairman remarked that the visitors' book recorded several visits by the Queen.

LIEBIG COMPANY'S EXTRACT
FOR WINTER NIGHTS.
A perfect extract of the Finest Beef, highly concentrated. Cheapest for Beef Tea and Kitchen use; it goes such a long way.
FOR WINTER NIGHTS.



THE WOMAN'S SIGNAL

A Weekly Record and Review of Woman's Work and Interests at Home and in the Wider World.

Editor—Mrs. FLORENCE FENWICK MILLER.

Corresponding Editors—THE LADY HENRY SOMERSET and Miss FRANCES E. WILLARD.

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12 months	...	6s. 6d.
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NOTICE.—The Editor apologises for the unforeseen lack of the "Signals from the Watch Tower" this week; the manuscript has unfortunately been lost in the post, and time does not permit of its being replaced. They will appear as usual next week.

TO THE FRIENDS OF ARMENIA.

LADY HENRY SOMERSET desires us to state that the growth of the Armenian work has obliged her to take an office separate from the headquarters of the B.W.T.A., and situated at 53 Victoria-street, S.W. Advice received from competent authorities in the different cities where Armenians have taken refuge point to a greater need for money and material than for clothing, because the working up of the material gives employment to those who have none, and because garments made in the country appear to suit best the people's needs. Nevertheless, where friends are kindly making clothing for these destitute people, they are desired to continue the work, and if possible to add clothing for men, which is wanted in various quarters. Piece goods and clothing are thankfully received at 53 Victoria-street, and distributed where the need is most pressing, so far as information received will allow.

MONTHLY REPORT OF THE CENTRAL NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

FOUNDED 1872.

THE object of the Society is to obtain the Parliamentary Franchise for Women on the same conditions as it is or may be granted to men.

The Society seeks to achieve this object:—

1. By acting as a centre for the collection and diffusion of information with regard to the progress of the movement in all parts of the country.
2. By holding public meetings in support of the repeal of the electoral disabilities of women.
3. By the publication of pamphlets, leaflets, and other literature bearing upon the question.

Treasurer—Mrs. RUSSELL COOKE.

Subscriptions and donations should be sent to Mrs. CHARLES BAXTER, Secretary, Central Office, Albany Buildings, 39, Victoria-street, S.W.

Subscribers are entitled to receive the Annual Report and copies of all literature.

The Monthly Report of this Society is now published in the WOMAN'S SIGNAL, which will be sent to Subscribers the first week in each month. We hope many of our members will take this paper in every week.

Cheques or Post Office Orders may be made payable to the Treasurer or the Secretary.

LECTURING CAMPAIGN FUND.

The following donations have been received since last month's report:—

	£	s.	d.
Miss Maud Key, per collecting card...	0	10	0
Miss Zona Vallance, ditto ...	0	10	0
Mrs. Morgan Browne, ditto ...	0	10	0
Mr. Henry Read ...	0	5	0
Miss Julia Cameron, collecting card	0	10	0

Miss Gertrude Stewart, who has filled the post of secretary for upwards of four years, has, the Committee regret to announce, been obliged to resign her post. The Committee have selected Mrs. Charles Baxter to take her place, and all communications in future should be addressed to Mrs. Baxter.

The Committee regret to have to note that Miss Isabella Tod had died in Belfast. She was a staunch upholder of Woman's Suffrage and has been a worker in the cause for about twenty-five years.

Miss Helen Blackburn's annual "Woman's Suffrage Calendar," that is such a useful companion to ladies' writing tables, with its up-to-date information on the condition of women in the past and in the present, has this year been given a new form. In honour of the commemoration of the Queen's long reign the Calendar comes out as a Jubilee Calendar, enlarged and beautified, with a specially designed cover. The front shows a portrait of Her Majesty in medalion form, encircled with a broad band bearing as a motto "Strength and honour are her clothing," and a simulated jewelled setting. The medalion is surmounted by the Royal crown, flanked by the dates 1837 and 1897, and a scroll below, with roses, shamrocks, and thistles intertwined, offers the dedication of the Calendar to the Women of the Empire. A most important and interesting chapter is among the

new features—a record of women's progress in Legislation and Citizenship, in Education, in Professional and Industrial Employment, and in Special Achievement and Associated Endeavour for the public service during the Queen's reign. The first years, it must be confessed, are blank, progress only beginning in 1855 with petitions against the laws relating to married women's property. After that it is to be noted that movement went on simultaneously in all directions, showing how one good, honest endeavour can assist others, equally pure in motive and intention.

SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE.

We have received the report of the Conference at Birmingham, and print some of the speeches to the first resolution.

SPEECHES TO RESOLUTION I.

On Friday, the 16th October, 1896, a National Conference of Delegates of Women's Suffrage Societies in Great Britain and Ireland was held in the Priory Schools, Birmingham. Mrs. Henry Fawcett presided, and the following Societies were represented: The Central National Society, the Central Committee, the Manchester National Society, the Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Luton, Nottingham, Leicester, Mansfield, Southport, Birkenhead, and Cambridge Women's Suffrage Societies, the Franchise League, the Edinburgh National Society, the Dublin and Belfast and North of Ireland Societies.

Mrs. Fawcett, in her opening speech, said: "Ladies, you are most of you aware of the circumstances which led to the calling together of this Conference. We are all aware, ladies, that there are two different kinds of Conferences. There is the Conference the object of which is to blow the trumpet in the presence of the public, to say what a very magnificent organisation we form, to bring out our triumphant successes into the strongest relief, and to say nothing about our failures and want of perfection. The object of the other kind of Conference is to confer. The Conference we are attending to-day is of the latter kind. We are not here to celebrate our own perfections, but rather to ponder and bear in mind those particulars in which we fall short of perfection. There are here met together representatives of as many as 22 Suffrage Societies, in various parts of the United Kingdom, to consider in what way our organisation can be improved, and what methods and measures can be adopted in order to cover the ground we have not yet been able to cover. A glance at the maps will show you that much still remains to be done. If we were a Conference of the first sort, we should dwell exclusively on the rather remarkable fact that during the last three years 309 Suffrage meetings have been held, and we should refrain from mentioning the fact that in England alone there have been, in the three years, eight counties in which no Suffrage meetings at all have been held, and three others in which only one meeting has been held. But, as we are here to-day to study our defects and the means of remedying them, I would call your attention particularly to these. We have yet a large field which we hope by better organisation to cover.

"Then, again, if we were a Conference of the first order we should dwell, with a satisfaction we are quite entitled to feel, upon the growth of Societies that are dealing with this Suffrage question. There are the exclusively Suffrage

societies, and also a number of political organisations which have declared themselves in favour of the Suffrage. Thus there has been considerable increase in the working strength of Women's Suffrage Societies; but all this makes increased organisation absolutely necessary. Only those that are Suffrage Societies pure and simple are represented here to-day; that is, we have omitted, for convenience sake, to extend the invitation to the representatives of political societies that have taken up Suffrage as a part of their programme. The very growth in the number of these Suffrage societies makes it necessary that we should map out between us various sections of England, in order that the work in various districts might be done more effectively.

"For myself I regard with much hopefulness the mere fact of our being met here together. I think it is a very useful thing indeed for friends working in the same cause to meet together, not constantly, perhaps, not annually or regularly, but from time to time, that is occasionally, in order to discuss the general outlook, to consider what is being done, and how our methods and organisation might be improved. I do not intend to touch in detail upon the various questions coming before you in the resolutions, but whatever method of work may be devised or accepted by this Conference, I believe you will all agree with me that in the long run there is only one method that is really effective, and that is to convince the consciences, the minds, and hearts of the people of England, whether men or women, that what we are seeking is likely to prove conducive to the general well-being of the nation. We are not seeking to turn Society upside down, or to turn women into men. Far from it. We are seeking to give women the power which would enable them the better to fulfil their duties as women. If we can show that we approach political questions in a reasonable, temperate, moderate spirit, I think we shall convince the men of the nation that the influence of women in politics would be a source of strength to the general condition of the country. I have said things myself which have rather partaken of the nature of threats, but I am sure that, in our more reasonable moments, we must feel that threats, without force behind them to carry them out, are amongst the most futile, absurd, and childish of things in the world, and threats, even when they have force behind them to carry them into effect, are not convincing. People are not convinced of the righteousness and justice of a cause by being threatened with something disagreeable. You may have heard the saying that before we can have wine or oil the grape must be crushed and the olive must be pressed. We have to work in this cause to produce this change, this conviction in the hearts of our countrymen and countrywomen, and it is in this spirit that I believe the work of the various Suffrage societies will be undertaken in order to bring it to a successful issue."

The first Resolution submitted was:—

"That this Conference resolves that each Society here represented undertake, as far as is practicable, a definite area of Great Britain and Ireland, with the object of extending the Women's Suffrage movement within that area, each Society being left free to work on its own lines."

Mrs. Thomas Taylor, in proposing it, said: I want to ask you first to look back at the work that has been done. It is nearly 25 years or so since I attended, in St. George's Hall, Regent-street, one of the first public meetings held about Women's Suffrage.

The few hundred women who got them up, and who wanted the Suffrage then, have grown, as we know by the Special Appeal that was presented this year, to a quarter of a million women, and those few early meetings have given rise to the number of meetings shown on the map recording the work of the last three years.

And yet with all this—with all these twenty-five years of work—Women's Suffrage is not yet won. How is this?

We all know that Women's Suffrage may come to pass at any time. Whenever it suits the needs of either political party, it will be taken up and carried. Man's political necessity will be woman's opportunity. But we cannot afford to wait. None of us wish to wait for the mere chance of Women's Suffrage being some day taken up to suit some political exigency. So we must seek for the real reasons why we have not yet got the Suffrage; and amongst all those that are hurled at our heads by friends and foes, only one to my mind really hits the nail on the head. It is this—"You have not got the great mass of women with you. The majority of women do not really care about the Suffrage." That, I think, we must all admit is true. There are hundreds and thousands of women who do care for the Suffrage; but there are millions—I speak advisedly—millions who not only do not care, but who have, many of them, never heard of it, and who certainly do not realise what it means. I refer to the Special Appeal in proof of this; 260,000 seems a large number of signatures to get in six months; but it comes to this, that it is just one out of every 40 adult women—the numbers, I assure you, are correct. Some here may think that we could easily have doubled the number in another six months. But those of us who acted on the Special Appeal Committee, I think, would very much doubt it; and personally I am convinced we could not: for this reason, that in the six months all who cared keenly about the Suffrage worked their utmost in the districts they could influence, and the other districts were beyond their reach. There were great tracts of country that would never have been reached even if the Appeal had been continued for two or three years, simply because there was no one there to work them. Look at Cumberland, at Lincoln, at Devonshire. What do all those blank spaces mean, but that there are no Suffrage women there, or only a few isolated individuals? If all the marked places may be taken as centres of light all those blank spaces are realms of darkness—heathen lands, so far as Women's Suffrage is concerned. And what chance, I ask you, have we of getting Women's Suffrage, or of having numbers of women at elections pressing M.P.'s for the Suffrage, when we have all that much country unconcerned about it—unconvinced? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? That is our problem to-day.

Now, I think it may be taken for granted that we all realise and agree as to the need there is to preach the gospel of Women's Suffrage to those as yet heathen districts. But I would urge on you as strongly as I can the need of doing the work systematically. Let us consider the position. How do we work now? There is no reason to blame the methods that have been pursued up to the present time. When any propaganda work of any sort is begun it is best to go first to the places most likely to receive it; in fact, to get a footing wherever possible. That is what has been done, and done successfully up to now. And

yet not altogether successfully, as those blank spaces show. Therefore, the question arises, Would it not be better to change the method of work, and instead of each Suffrage society getting up meetings here and there and sending speakers hither and thither, would it not be better, instead of this costly and aimless method of procedure, for each Suffrage society to undertake a definite area of work, and work it for the next few years in any way it thinks best? For instance, suppose the Manchester Society undertook the North of England, the Great College Street Society the East, the Victoria Street Society the West (including Wales), the Bristol Society the South-west, leaving Birmingham and Leeds and other Suffrage societies a definite area of so many miles surrounding their town, or even the whole of their own county; the constituencies of London being divided between the London offices. That in the rough is what this resolution proposes.

Though the definite area undertaken by a Society should as a rule be worked solely by that Society, we should, I think, have no hard and fast line—only a general system of work; for we are all friends and fellow-workers; and if in any special town a particular speaker is desired for a meeting—a speaker belonging to some other Suffrage society—that speaker should freely go there. Also political associations affiliated to any of the Suffrage societies will continue to belong to that Society.

And here I want to meet what may be called the political difficulty. On broad lines the Victoria Street Society has chiefly Liberal workers on its committee; and the Great College Street Society has chiefly Unionists and Conservatives. But I see no difficulty in undertaking definite areas on this account: for it is a root principle with us all that Women's Suffrage knows no party. And not only is it our principle, but it is our practice that, in ordinary work, year in year out, the work of all the Suffrage societies is done on non-party lines. At election times it is necessarily different. Each district wants speakers that suit its special political needs; and, therefore, I would suggest that during a General Election, or bye-election, and perhaps for a month preceding it, the whole system of definite areas of work should lie in abeyance for the time, and the Societies meet in a Parliamentary Committee, as was done this year.

There is the difficulty of funds, if, as I suggest, regular paid organisers are to be employed. I do not, however, think this would be any real difficulty. I believe the plan would be found not only to pay its way, but to pay well. The organiser will sow, the secretary will reap, some months afterwards; for at present many persons who, from one cause or another, become interested in Women's Suffrage, do not know which Suffrage society to join, or to which they should send a contribution; and it ends at present in their not joining, and in not sending any contribution.

Finally, I would like to say that as we are all in accord on Suffrage matters, and have in our rules precisely the same objects, I see no reason why at some future date the various Suffrage societies at present existing should not join and form themselves into Divisions of one National Society for Women's Suffrage, to which these Societies avowedly belong (as may be seen in the title-page of their reports), and thus form the Northern Division, the Eastern Division, the Western Division, the South-western Division, the Birmingham Branch, the Mansfield Branch, of the National Society for Women's Suffrage. We should then, each committee and organisation, be perfectly free as now, and yet present a united front to the world.

I feel convinced that, if definite areas for work were adopted, each Society would gain largely in membership and in money, and be able to do treble the amount of propaganda work. I therefore hope most earnestly that you will adopt this resolution, which I now beg to move.

The Hon. Mrs. Arthur Lyttelton, in seconding the resolution, said: Mrs. Fawcett and ladies, — Mrs. Taylor has gone in such detail into the scheme embodied in this resolution, that it is unnecessary for me to trespass upon your time by any further elucidation. But I would like to say a few words in advocacy of the resolution. What is essential is that the societies should work together perfectly amicably, as indeed they have been doing for the last few years. If we disagree among ourselves, the thing we have at heart will go wrong. No amount of rules, maps, divisions, or partitions, or anything in the world will have effect unless we are all agreed. And there need be no differences between us; for, surely, in the face of such an enormously important measure as this of Women's Suffrage, we must agree to sink all differences—to fight them out, if need be, after the united struggle is over. Let us keep this question of the Suffrage clearly before us, for it stands in the forefront of all other questions. The more we face the whole position the more we are convinced that it is a great stumbling-block in our way—this assertion of the inferiority of women. In whatever direction our special efforts lie, whether it be in political organisations, temperance work, the reform of various laws, or attempts to raise the status of women in great towns, whatever our work may be, we are always confronted—I am convinced of it—by this one difficulty, the assertion by the State of the inequality of women and men. Only let us get rid of that, and the way will be cleared for us to discuss other subjects. Let all those anxious for the amelioration of the position of women, in whatever department of life it may be, put aside their differences, and agree to some such scheme as that laid before us to-day, which will, as we hope, ensure that every man and woman in England will be made acquainted with what we seek. This will enable us to have a definite plan to put before our supporters, many of whom have contributed to the Suffrage movement during the last twenty or thirty years, and who are growing tired of giving, for, as they say, we seem no nearer to our goal. Now we can go before them and say that we intend to have a company of organisers (at present we have only one in Manchester) prepared to go through the towns and villages of the country, so that no one in future will be able to say that they have not heard of Woman Suffrage. You know the sort of objections by which we are confronted,—“You are undermining everything that we hold sacred,” and so on. We have to go before these people and tell them simply and plainly what we want. Having done that, we shall find that we have throughout the constituencies a determined band of workers who will put this question before the country, and press it upon Parliament, and thus remove the charge made against us—and it is a perfectly true charge—that a large proportion of women do not care for Women's Suffrage. I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

Mrs. Scatcherd, of Morley, said,—I think the resolution may have struck some of you, as it did me, that if it be carried out it will have the effect not only of obviating overlapping, but it will rouse each district up to work with more enthusiasm and energy. Thirty

years ago the country was divided into six districts. The outlines have become blurred, so to speak, and now it has been found necessary to have such a resolution as this. The question is, What are we to do now? It is useless merely to say pleasant things; we must speak the truth and face the situation. Our experience, then, is that the day of the average public meeting, which we have been holding for the last fifteen years, is practically over; and the drawing-room meeting is also becoming a thing of the past. What did you get at these meetings? A resolution passed in favour of the Suffrage. What next? Well, nothing—nothing practical. You get an expression of approval, intellectual approval; but that is vastly different from conviction. Conviction leads to action. How are we to get it? Public and drawing-room meetings will not suffice—the old order changeth; and we must devise a new. I would strongly advise what the Franchise League has done, and that is to hold meetings at some special crisis, which would form a good peg to work upon; say at the time of an election, Municipal elections in November, School Board and Parish Councils elections; and meetings held in connection with these would attract deeper interest than if held at any odd time. But a great deal of our work, ladies, must be indirect; such, for instance, as influencing various political societies.

Mrs. Russell-Cooke: Ladies and gentlemen, —I have great pleasure in coming here to support this resolution. I am glad to see in this room the representatives of so many Societies, with differences, perhaps, but all caring intensely about getting the vote for women, and all realising how entirely that is the key to the whole position. But this position changes, as has been just said; and, therefore, it behoves us to bestir ourselves to do something new. What has struck me lately at Suffrage meetings is the immense number of new faces, showing that many fresh people are taking an interest in the subject. That is a most encouraging sign. But the most important thing for us now is to undertake what may be called missionary work. There are still very many places up and down the country where people know and care nothing about Woman Suffrage. The great fault of meetings is that they cannot be got up in places where there are no friends, and thus there has been a tendency to confine these meetings to places that are already converted. One woman, firmly convinced of the necessity of Woman's Suffrage, going into some quiet town or village, might, with her missionary enthusiasm, convert many people to her side. In a report that might not sound very grand; but, after all, it is real missionary work. It is certainly discouraging work, and needs women of great determination to carry it out. There was a time when I thought it a misfortune that Woman Suffrage was split up amongst so many Societies, but I have now come to see that each Society gets hold of a different set of people; so there has been no harm, but rather much good done in the past by this division. But, in order to cover the ground more effectively, greater care must be taken not to overlap, as has hitherto been the case. I am not sure that we shall be able absolutely to keep entirely to fixed lines. You all know that if you get up a concert, and you say to a friend, “Here are ten tickets; will you kindly distribute them among your friends?” you manage to get them all taken; but if you say, “Take some tickets, and dispose of what you can,” the chances are you will find only one or two will have gone. The same thing applies to

the work of these Suffrage societies. I do not want larger areas to be given to people than they can manage; nor that we should be too ambitious about it; but I do want the various Societies to be agreed to take definite areas and to work them as carefully as possible. If they cannot cover them this year, they can continue the work next year and the year after; and by these means we shall get such a propelling power behind Members of Parliament as is absolutely necessary if we would get this question through the House of Commons. We are no longer a small body of women wire-pulling, we are an immense body of women, not merely in the big towns such as London or Manchester or Birmingham, but scattered over the whole country. I have never known so much active work for Woman Suffrage proposed so early in the autumn. Years have elapsed since there has been such an intensity of feeling; so we must put our shoulders to the wheel. Altogether, I am extremely glad this Conference has been called so early, so that we may look forward to a winter of increased active work.

Mrs. Beddoe: Mrs. Fawcett and ladies,—I am sorry to be the only representative of what I do think through all these years has been one of the most active and prosperous branches of our Society. Our chairman has said that we do not wish to blow the trumpet; but if we can only agree unanimously to sink smaller differences, and to present ourselves as a united force before the world, then we may take it for certain that someone will blow the trumpet for us. No one can say that the present structure of party politics is founded upon a rock; indeed, many think it is in a very crumbling condition. Now, should any changes take place in party arrangements—and in these times changes sometimes occur so suddenly that it is possible we might not have to wait many months—then this, our cause, for which we have been working more than a quarter of a century, might at once come to the front. Every year I live I am the more convinced that this question is the most important that concerns women; it forms the groundwork of everything else. Let us, then, be united; let this resolution be carried unanimously, or else let the question be deferred. Do let it go forth to the public that we are all agreed. It is indeed most foolish to enter upon a great contest and let the enemy think that your forces are divided; it is also a mistake to let the enemy know more than you would wish them to know in regard to your future line of policy.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously, and the areas were allotted to the different societies.

A member of our committee who is in Paris has sent us the following extracts from an article by François Coppée:—
THE WOMAN MOVEMENT.

The woman movement is developing. We mean by the words “woman movement” the efforts of those free spirits who are asking for perfect equality of the sexes, both from a political and social point of view. This is already growing to be something more than a myth, and they have made a good step forward towards their ideal. Many women now-a-days go into business like men, and even enter those professions hitherto exclusively reserved for members of the sterner sex. They are, as we know, much worse paid, and cannot look for the same preferment as men can. Of course, this is very unjust, and in the public service it is nothing less than scandalous. Ah! we are still a long way off from Utopia.

I certainly experienced a distinct feeling of pleasure the first time a pretty post office clerk sold me stamps; but when I heard she was badly paid, and that the Government only preferred her to a male employé because she was cheaper, I began to wonder whether after all this pretty young woman would not have been better off looking after a home and a baby, and I asked myself if Michelet, that old-fashioned reactionary (as he is now considered), was so very far wrong when he declared that the man should earn enough for the two.

The Pioneers will, of course, tell me that this is but a transition stage, a crisis—but it is amazing how long they last—these transition stages!

Still, we mustn't discourage the movement, for it is in the right direction, its governing idea is generous and true, and it is most interesting to watch its development.

Such a growth cannot possibly be unaccompanied by some result, it must at any rate remove some of the obstacles which now bar the way to the social emancipation of women; it is bound to destroy certain prejudices, certain laws even, which still keep women in a state of servitude and dependency.

The Senate would do well to vote for the Goirand (Married Women's Property) law, already passed, if I am not mistaken, by the Chamber of Deputies. The originator of this excellent statute was really Madame Schmahl, and it does as much credit to her common sense as to her good feeling. This law would give to married women the “right to dispose of the result of their labour, or of their personal industry,” and would thus secure means of subsistence to many a poor creature who is to-day without protection against a prodigal husband, a gambler, or a drunkard. Amongst the reforms demanded by these advanced women there are certainly several which strike one as just, practical, and easy of adoption.

Bossuet shocks me when he contemptuously dubs woman the “supernumerary bone,” and Proudhon's epigram “housekeeper or courtesan” is horrible. But since they prophesy in the near future a woman's “1789,” I accord them willingly here and now, to avoid the conflict, the bauble of which we men are so proud—the right to vote. Do not distress yourselves! There will be no violent change in the order of things, for in their hands universal suffrage would be neither less blind nor less capricious than it has proved in ours.

To the ever-recurring charge that we cannot fight, and therefore ought not to vote, we reply that the logic of the exclusion will be manifest when all men too weak, too short, or too old for the military standard be likewise disfranchised.
Frances Power Cobbe.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN FRANCE.

Mrs. CRAWFORD, the Paris correspondent of the *Daily News*, writes to that journal:—The progress of the woman's question in France in the last few years is too striking for anyone to deny it. As living becomes more expensive the competition of women in nearly every profession becomes keener. This has brought about a new condition of life, and it is evident that manners and legislation must adapt themselves to it. The one profession (besides priesthood) which must always be man's monopoly is the military profession. Every increase in the Army, and the tendency is towards increase without limit, withdraws men from other employment, and tends to push women into the vacancies. If the folly of armaments should continue for many years, the result will be in France, owing to her stationary population, a nation of women-supported men. The men will spend their lives in barracks as parasites on the women forming the community of wage earners and taxpayers. Thus, with all appearances of civilization, we shall have reverted to the state of African tribes. Against the coming of the evil day it is necessary that women should be prepared as to the extent or nature of women's rights. Differences of opinion exist, but all admit that feminine legislation will be a feature of next Session.

Among the signs of the present interest in feminine questions, I note that Professor Flach is devoting his winter lectures at the Collège de France, to the subject of the condition of women in France. Even the Catholic party wishes to be up to date. We learn of the foundation of a Society for higher female education, called the Institute of Ladies of the Christian Preceptorate, by the Vicomtesse d'Adhemar, with the support of the Abbé Fremont, the distinguished Madeleine preacher. Still more remarkable is the fact that the Catholic Institute, a sort of private University founded by the Catholic party to counteract the rationalist spirit of official teaching, is opening, just after the holidays, classes for young ladies.

Is marriage good, bad, or indifferent? Is this institution to be preserved as it is, suppressed, or improved? This is the subject of a spirited booklet, by Madame Jeanne Schmahl, under the title, “The Future of Marriage.” The foundress of the “*Avant Courrière*” (the Pioneer) takes for granted that few people are in favour of marriage as it exists.

Free union she brushes aside, nor can she understand how any woman can support a system so contrary to women's interest. Motherhood is the essential function of woman-kind; it makes her require man's support.

Free marriage would not only reduce woman to the most hopeless poverty at a time when she was least able to bear it, but would sacrifice the child. The wife under the Collectivist system would merely change masters. Instead of depending on her husband she would depend on the State, relieving man of any responsibility. These theories, says Madame Schmahl, would reduce woman to a slavery far more degrading (*sic*) than the present legal marriage, nor does she allow the opening of liberal professions to women to be a solution unless for those women who are not concerned in the preservation of the race. What, then, does the President of the Pioneer wish for? More justice, she replies, in marriage. She advocates limitation to the husband's rights over his wife's person and property. Everybody will agree with her as to the woman's property question. A Woman's Property Act has passed through the Chamber, and is now before the Senate. This result is due chiefly to the “*Avant Courrière*” and its President.

THE BUTTERFLIES' HOBBY.

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

I HAPPENED one night in my travels
To stray into Butterfly Vale,
Where my wondering eyes beheld butterflies
With wings that were wide as a sail.
They lived in such houses of grandeur—
Their days were successions of joys;
And the very last fad these butterflies had
Was making collections of boys.

There were boys of all sizes and ages
Pinned up on their walls. When I said
‘Twas a terrible sight to see boys in that plight,
I was answered: “Oh, well, they are dead.
We catch them alive, but we kill them
With ether, a very nice way;
Just look at this fellow, his hair is so yellow,
And his eyes such a beautiful grey.”

“Then there is that droll little darkey,
As black as the clay at our feet;
He sets off that blonde, that is pinned just
beyond,

In a way most artistic and neat.
And now let me show you the latest,
A specimen really select,
A boy with a head that is carrot red,
And a face that is funnily speckled.”

“We cannot decide where to place him,
Those spots bar him out of each class:
We think him a treasure to study at leisure,
And analyse under a glass.”
I seemed to grow cold as I listened
To the words that these butterflies spoke,
With fear overcome, I was speechless and
dumb,
And then, with a start—I awoke!

“Do you know that your dog barks all night?” “Yes, I suppose he does. But don't worry about him. He makes up for it by sleeping all day.”

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WHAT AN ELECTION COSTS IN AMERICA.

The cost of a presidential election might well challenge the attention of thoughtful citizens. A writer in *Frank Leslie's Monthly* of August last estimated from carefully gathered figures the money cost of a presidential election. This estimate includes the national campaign funds of each party, the state funds of the same, and the loss to business which always ensues because of the uncertainty regarding the financial policy of the next four years. On the basis of these elements the cost is estimated at nearly two million pounds. Probably the cost of the last election exceeded that of previous elections, as the loss to business was much greater than usual, owing to the fact that the difference in the avowed financial policies of the two parties was unusually radical.

But the money item is but one part of the cost and in importance must rank least. The cost in brain and nerve power no one has ever attempted to compute. We laugh at the pandemonium which breaks loose in the conventions when the candidate is nominated, and doubt with Anna Shaw whether the "emotional female mind" could manifest more striking symptoms of temporary insanity than does the "legal male mind" on those occasions; but who stops to consider, when hats are thrown high in air to be trampled upon again by their excited owners, when men alternately laugh and cry and embrace each other, yelling like demons all the time, the meaning of these crazy demonstrations? Who reads the story they tell of sleepless nights, of physical power used to utter exhaustion and lashed on to unnatural effort by alcohol, of overwrought nerves strained to the utmost tension, which thus give way in exhibitions of wildest excitement when the crucial moment comes? The public in general gets no glimpse behind the scenes. But the story of the men who secured the first nomination of Lincoln tells something of the nerve power expended in the election of a President. For a week these men slept only two hours a night, and every waking moment body and mind were strained to the utmost. With every nerve on the alert they watched and sought to defeat the plans of their opponents; with every faculty of intellect aroused they argued with all whom there was any hope of winning to their side. Governor Russell's life, sacrificed in its prime, is but a natural result of such seasons of excitement. But the one life laid down stands for many lives whose nervous powers are shattered for ever, and while the strain is at its highest in the conventions, the same conditions in greater or less degree extend all over the nation throughout the entire campaign.

But the greatest cost of all is the cost in character. There are legitimate uses for the campaign fund. The spreading of literature is a great educational agency. But that use of the fund which buys votes not only undermines our political institutions, it destroys the moral sense of buyer and bought alike. And this use

of the campaign fund is common to both the leading parties. During every political campaign every saloon in the land is opened to voters in behalf of both parties. Only He who notes the sparrow's fall measures the ruin wrought.

And we who catch but a glimpse of the great total are constrained to ask, Does it pay? If the question was one merely of a change of rulers, the answer must be an unhesitating No. But it is far more than this; it involves our entire system of representative self-government, and that involves not only what little that system has already done to better the condition of humanity, but also its possibilities of future helpfulness.

Thus moralises the *American Union Signal* on its country's recent experiences. An English general election costs less, both in money and nerves, because as a rule less is at stake; but yet the cost is heavy. There is no doubt, therefore, some reason in the notion of a good many women that the best thing they can do is to stand aside from this turmoil and expense of purse and life. But further consideration should show that this is as much a shirking of duty as it would be (say) to refuse to nurse a sick child because of the trouble and wear and tear of it. The right side (as we see it) in regard to public business has claims on us that are as real as our private duty, simply because, under a representative system of government, good public institutions, laws and customs, and right-minded men in places of power can only be secured by good and right-minded individuals, one and all, taking their share in the selection and return of representatives.

Though the Women's Suffrage leaders did their best to avoid bringing temperance forward in the recent campaign in California, the testimony is universal, that the liquor-sellers mustered to oppose it, and were the real cause of its rejection. Here are some characteristic cuttings from the journals of "the trade" in the State:—

"Now, boys, if you want the licence question handed over to the tender mercies of the women, vote for the Suffrage amendment."

"If the Suffrage amendment is adopted, the old girls won't do a thing to 'the friends who keep saloons.'"

"Remember that the 'crusaders' who attack saloons, smash furniture, pour liquor into the gutter, &c., are always mostly women. Remember this when you are asked to vote for the Suffrage amendment."

"If a liquor man desires to commit business suicide, let him vote for Woman Suffrage."

"Treat your wives and daughters as good, true women should be treated, but don't forget that they are women. Don't give them edged tools to play with. They may not cut themselves with the ballot, but they will cut the ground from beneath your business."

"The prohibition papers are nearly all run by women. They all support the Woman Suffrage Amendment. Liquor men; do you tumble, or must a house fall upon you?"



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Chats with the Housewife ON HEALTH IN THE HOME AND DOMESTIC THINGS OF NOTE.

COLD FEET.

HYDROPATHIC TREATMENT FOR A POOR CIRCULATION.

[The Editor does not endorse this heroic treatment except for the young and hardy, but a sensible modification of it may be frequently found advantageous in the class of cases referred to.]

Cold hands and feet are neglected too frequently. To suffer from chilled extremities seems a slight matter, more unpleasant than serious, and yet, like the proverbial stitch taken in time, if treated promptly and properly an oftentimes chronic affliction is escaped.

Because of those too often slighted cold toes and fingers frequent headaches arise, early twinges of rheumatism are felt, and that most dreadful of all habits, insomnia, is contracted. Of course it seems too small a matter to worry the family doctor about, and a hot-water bath at night brings relief, but the trouble is not local, as so many persons think, and the warm foot flannel and hot bottle fail to create a cure.

COLD-WATER TREATMENT.

Cold extremities arise from poor circulation, and to touch the root of the matter a simple course of treatment for stirring sluggish blood ought to be put into progress. One way, and undoubtedly the best, especially for persons who are obliged to lead rather sedentary lives, is with clear cold water. Nothing will stir the blood like cold water properly applied, for cold water acts as a tonic and a liniment, and, if its aid is constantly invoked, it will in time almost cure an obstinate case of insomnia.

Delicate persons who suffer from over-fullness of the head, moist hands and feet, chilblains, and nerves, must court its blessings cautiously, and first by the morning bath. On getting out of bed the teeth ought to be brushed in a cup of cold water, and the throat repeatedly gargled. The bath ought then to follow, in a room in which the temperature is equable but distinctly fresh, and before touching the water a few calisthenic exercises should be taken.

Try ten movements the first morning, fifteen the next, twenty the third, and so on until fifteen to eighteen minutes every day are spent in bending from the hips, expanding the chest, &c. By this time a considerable glow is aroused and the bath should be turned on, a fourth full of tepid water. This is a proper temperature to soap and genuinely scrub in, but when the lather is to be washed off turn on the cold water faucet.

Let it run, and, kneeling in the tub, vigorously dash the slowly cooling water over the shoulders, back, and arms. Don't attempt too cold a bath the first day, but little by little permit the chill to grow stronger as the mornings grow on, until in the course of ten days you can let the tub run full of frigid water as you dash about and feel that you keenly regret leaving the bracing bath.

FRICITION.

From the water you should step on a bath mat, and then, with an unbleached Turkish towel, rub down from neck to heels. If there is no reaction of languor and chilliness a half an hour after such a bath its effects will prove essentially beneficial. One sensation sure to be noticed will be a great itching of the feet and

limbs, produced by the blood forcing its way through long unused channels to the surface. In course of time this will disappear, and after a week or more of such baths a rubber tube and spray nozzle ought to be purchased. On going through the warm and then cold splashing fix this tube to the cold water faucet and spray the body. This will so excite the blood as to give one the sensation almost of standing before a hot fire, but it is always to be remembered that to take such a bath and then, dressing hastily, go at once to breakfast is an injurious process. At least three-quarters of an hour must elapse between the bath and any meal, giving ample time for the blood to return in a measure to the stomach, where it is needed for complete digestion.

TO BED WITH WET FEET.

To stimulate circulation yet further, salt thrown into the bath proves an excellent tonic. Still, for all this bathing and a walk once a day in the open air your feet may be cold and clammy when bedtime comes. If such is the case, make a habit of taking a glass of cold water before retiring, slip into night dress and big shawl, and, sitting on the bedside, put your feet into a foot tub holding about four inches of water that is keenly cold.

Sit with your feet in the water for six or eight minutes, moving them constantly all the while, then lift them out, wind up in a big towel and thrust right into bed. Don't attempt to dry them off, and the towel is only used to keep the bed from receiving too much water from the dripping extremities.

It will be surprising how soon a rush of blood to the wet feet will warm and soothe and gently induce peaceful sleep. A winter of these foot baths on retiring will set the blood in circulation, in spite of everything, and stimulate the nerves wonderfully. The results are almost identical with the effects gained in following the Knieppe cure, and the method is vastly simpler and less expensive.

Cold, moist hands can be similarly treated. Dip them into water that is almost icy. Hold them for a bit, then wrap in a towel and thrust under a shawl or blanket. The pallid girl will find a receipt for pink cheeks in her own basin. First let her, with a wet crash cloth, well rubbed with soap, fairly scour every inch of her countenance and clear off the suds in warm water. When all soap is washed from both face and rag, she should take another basin of very cold water and over and over again dash the invigorating fluid upon her face. When brow and cheeks are fairly glowing she must then use a fine towel to dry off with, polishing every feature as if it was the handle of the big front

door. In the end she will find herself the possessor of not only a clean but a rosy face, and the texture of her skin will be all the softer and sweeter for these heroic measures.

ECONOMICAL COOKERY.

By Miss LIZZIE HERITAGE.

(First Class Diplôme Cookery and Domestic Economy; Author of "Cassell's New Universal Cookery," "Cookery for Schools," "True Economies in Household Management" (Prize Essay), &c., &c.)

FISH AND GRAVY.

In a previous number of this paper reference was made to gravies suitable for service with fish. Recipes for a few are now given, as well as for the dishes with which they form fitting adjuncts. It is certain that many who are in the habit of sending nice sauces to table with boiled or steamed fish seldom think of a gravy in connection with baked fish, although in some instances it is the making of the dish.

STEWED FISH.

Such as cod, comes as a change from the more common modes of serving. For a couple of pounds of cleaned fish, the bones should be put on with any trimmings, in cold water, with a bunch of herbs and an onion, a little salt and some peppercorns, an hour beforehand, and simmered down to half a pint; skim as required, then strain, and use this liquor as the foundation. It should be hot when the fish, neatly cut up, is placed in; add a spoonful of any sauce or vinegar to flavour, or the juice of half a lemon, and cook softly for twenty minutes, more or less, according to the thickness of the fish; then mix a little browned flour with cold water to a smooth paste; take the fish up with a slice, and keep it hot, add the thickening, and boil up, and just before serving put in half an ounce to an ounce of butter in little bits; this gives richness and softness to the gravy. The addition of a spoonful of chopped parsley or capers, or a hard egg in dice, may be borne in mind from time to time by way of a change. Some tomato pulp can be added to gravy of this class with good results, and where rice is liked the blending of a teaspoonful or more curry powder with the stew may be strongly recommended; for while being less pungent than a curry proper it is a very tasty addition to dishes that is sure to find many admirers.

BAKED FRESH HADDOCK.

whether stuffed or not (and veal stuffing is as good as any), is all the better for a brown gravy. Dish the fish when done and keep it hot; melt an ounce of butter in the baking tin, and incorporate with it a tablespoonful or more of browned flour, then add half a pint or three-quarters of fish stock or water and boil up well; do not omit a few drops of good browning, then flavour with a tablespoonful of any nice ketchup or store sauce; the vinegar from pickled walnuts

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with any hot sauce is good, or caper vinegar or lemon juice alone will serve where an acid gravy is liked. Salt and pepper must not be forgotten; and many appreciate the flavour of a spoonful of fried onion and carrot simmered for a short time in the liquid. Strain before serving, and pour round the fish, not over it.

A brown gravy such as has already been detailed in these pages made from meat stock, or rather from bones, is also a good thing with any fish of the dry or insipid kind. It should not possess a strong meaty taste, and is best flavoured with a little anchovy or other fish essence, and acid in some form is called for. When oysters are being used for any dish, should there be more liquor than is required, it is hardly needful to say that in a fish gravy it may find a most acceptable place.

A VERY GOOD GRAVY

for various kinds of fish, baked, fried, grilled, &c., is thus made. Take equal parts of fresh tomato pulp and stock from bones of a gelatinous kind, such as neck of veal, and to half a pint add a teaspoonful of browned flour and half an ounce of butter; boil up, put in a teaspoonful of lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste, half a teaspoonful of anchovy essence, and, just before serving, a little chopped parsley. A slice of onion stuck with a clove is to be simmered in the gravy and removed before serving. This may be browned and strengthened with a little liquid browned or a few grains of brown salt, and a little meat extract. With a similar base a teaspoonful of the liquor from piccalilli, and some of the pickle chopped small, or some hot chutney, also chopped a little, is all that is required to produce a very savoury dish. The precise consistence is a matter of opinion, but a gravy is not to be as thick as a sauce. One homely seasoning, completely overlooked in many a home, either for fish gravies or any other, is to be found in mustard. Mustard sauce with fresh herrings many know to be a good thing; such should try a little mustard added to a brown gravy in sufficient amount to give zest. A bay leaf is also very valuable; the same may be said of a pinch of celery seed. As to tarragon vinegar, that should find a place in every store cupboard, if only for use in fish gravies and sauces; it is an excellent seasoning if carefully used; while as to genuine mushroom ketchup, one is safe in using it often, for, with the simplest stock and a little thickening, one gets very readily a tasty gravy that is well calculated to remove the stigma of insipidity from any dish.

HOME GARDENING FOR LADIES.

BY MRS. E. L. CHAMBERLAIN, F.R.H.S.
SOME HINTS ABOUT GLASS HOUSES.
In these days glass structures can be bought so cheaply that it is seldom any persons at all fond of gardening do not possess one or more of them. The acres that are covered with glass for market purposes increase every year in England, at a great rate. Only the other day a nurseryman near London told me he had been obliged to entirely change the nature of his stock because in two years' time his ground, which used to stand well open to the air and light, had been completely surrounded by other nurseries, all composed of glass, which so darkened his houses that he could no longer make flowers bloom, and had been forced to substitute foliage plants.

Now these nurserymen, mostly practical working gardeners, to whom every shilling of outlay is of importance, never commit the mistake of buying very cheap ready-made structures, for they know that at the rates advertised (which prove so tempting to amateurs) it cannot reasonably be expected that the wood should be seasoned, and the work be really well finished, or the paint and putty be of satisfactory quality. They usually put up the brick-work or concrete walls, &c., themselves, and give a good price for properly-made sashes and lights, which are sent out by good firms well made, numbered ready for putting together, with all screws and bars, &c., that will be necessary. The wood or iron work should

be guaranteed to be painted with three good coats of oil paint. The cheap firms profess to do this, but, as a matter of fact, they generally only put two coats, and those have scarcely any oil in them.

If any readers are thinking of erecting glass houses they must remember the law of landlord and tenant in this relation. Those who occupy their own property, or have a long lease, need not mind how or where they put the glass; but if they are yearly tenants, or have but a short lease or agreement, then it is of great importance.

A greenhouse, conservatory, pit, or other glass house, having solid brick foundations and walls, or being in any way joined to an existing building, becomes the property of the landlord on the close of the tenancy. Should the tenant wish to be able to remove his house when he gives up the premises, then he (or she) must be careful to keep it a "tenant's fixture"—that is, it must rest merely on a single course of bricks below the ground level. It must not have a permanent path, nor must it be attached to a wall by nails, screws, joists, or in any other way.

Possibly some readers have glass, or are thinking of putting some up, for market purposes. Supposing such glass to be merely occupying a part of their private gardens, then no reduction in rates can be claimed, but should a special piece of ground be utilised for growing for market it may then be worth while to claim that it should only be charged under the Agricultural Ratings Act. This Act is generally recognised as applying to nursery and market gardens, but local authorities have urged that a piece of ground covered with glass houses cannot be regarded as a "garden," because plants are not put in them to grow naturally, as in a garden, but are forced by artificial means.

Nine years ago the case of "Purser v. the Worthing Local Board" was heard in the Queen's Bench Division, and decided against the local authorities. The question has cropped up again quite lately; and at Shrewsbury, Cardiff, and other places the verdict has been given in favour of the gardener. The law enacts that market gardens and nursery grounds be assessed in respect only of one-fourth part of the net annual value.

Persons having extensive glass houses, with valuable contents, should insure them from fire. The rate charged for this is high in comparison with that for house and furniture, as the risk is greater, owing to the slighter and more inflammable nature of the buildings, and that fire occurring at night might not be discovered in time for help to avail.

Insurance companies usually inspect the premises and charge according to the degree of danger which they consider to exist. They are guided by the amount and position of the wood-work, the nature of the heating apparatus, and its mode of setting, the distance from a dwelling-house and so forth.

One parting hint. I lately warned you, my readers, against "cheap" fruit trees. I now repeat the warning against "cheap" greenhouses, "cheap" tools, bulbs, garden seeds and roots. You may occasionally buy an article of clothing at a marvellously low price, because, though good in material and make, it is "out of date." Fleeting fashion does not affect the goods I write about: if of first-rate quality, or second-rate, they have their definite value, and the experienced gardener knows it is hopeless to expect a bargain if one pays only the worth of a third or fourth-rate article.

GUESTS.—The coming of guests revives and enriches the common life, for each one has his own tale to tell. His presence in the house is an inspiration, and he does not utterly depart with the Godspeed at the outer gate; something has been left behind, the effect of another individuality which leaves its trace on the household, and a subtle fragrance, as when sandal wood has lain for a while in paper, or rosemary among clothes.—John Watson.

A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.—Solomon.

WOES OF AN INSURANCE AGENT.

INTERESTING INTERVIEW AT CANNING TOWN.

"WHAT, Mr. Kirby, the Insurance agent?" And as soon as the reporter of the *East London Advertiser*—East London's leading newspaper—answered in the affirmative, half a dozen little ones promptly offered to show the way to 28, Percy-street, Canning Town, the home of this well-known resident.



"A fine specimen of British manhood."

Mr. Kirby is as fine a specimen of British manhood as one could wish to see, brimming over with courtesy and good humour. He told the reporter that he collects from over 2,000 persons every week on behalf of a large insurance company. But it was about his recent remarkable experiences the reporter wished to hear.

Mr. Kirby's narrative ran thus: "Many months ago I began to feel queer. At first my appetite failed; I began to get listless. I would come home in the afternoon with hardly an atom of life in me. I got melancholy and depressed, and all desire to live seemed gone. In fact, my life was a misery. I tried several doctors and various tonics, but could get no benefit.



"Melancholy and depressed."

"Then, some few weeks ago, I had my attention drawn to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. I had heard them described as an excellent tonic, and I thought to myself, 'This is exactly what I want.' I got one box, and then another. The result? After the first two or three doses I felt a great change. As I persevered, this change became more noticeable. The feeling of lassitude left me; I no longer felt melancholy; and, in fact, felt a new man."

"And are you still taking the Pills?" "Oh, no; not now," was the reply. "I have no need of them. I feel quite cured, and have not had the slightest return of my symptoms. I look on Dr. Williams' Pink Pills as a most marvellous remedy, and fully as efficacious as they are described. I can, as far as my own experience goes, bear testimony to their merit. They cured me when all other medicines failed."

Mr. Kirby's experience has been that of many other sufferers, for Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People have cured more than five thousand cases of disease arising from an impoverished state of the blood, such as anemia, pale and sallow complexion, general weakness, depression, loss of appetite, palpitation, shortness of breath, pains in the back, nervous headache, early decay, all forms of female weakness. These Pills are not a purgative: they are not like other medicines, nor can they be imitated, as is sometimes dishonestly pretended; take care that the package bears the full name, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People and in case of doubt send direct to Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, 46, Holborn-viaduct, London, E.C., as the Pills can be had post-free at 2s. 9d., or six boxes for 13s. 9d. They have cured numerous cases of rheumatism, paralysis, locomotor ataxy, sciatica,

and influenza. Pink Pills sold loose, or from glass jars, are not the pills which cured Mr. Kirby, but a useless imitation.

"WOMAN'S SIGNAL" ARMENIAN REFUGEE FUND.

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THE following subscriptions have been received at the WOMAN'S SIGNAL Office from Tuesday, December 29th, up to Tuesday, January 5th:—

	£	s.	d.
Public Meeting and Sale of Work, Sunningdale Branch B.W.T.A., per Mrs. E. M. Crofts, Hon. Sec. ...	5	7	6
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"C. T." ...	2	0	0
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Mrs. Isaacs, Elham, Lincoln ...	0	2	6
New Year's Gift, "Francesca" ...	0	2	6
COLLECTING CARDS. The following have been returned filled— From— Mr. T. Warburton, Shady Grove, Aisager ...	0	12	6
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Total ...	£517	3	11

Further contributions are earnestly requested. Will correspondents please state whether Mrs. or Miss? Clothing must not be sent to this office, but may be forwarded to Lady H. Somerset, "Friends of Armenia" office, 53, Victoria-street, London, S.W.

A REPORTER sent to the newspaper he represented a paragraph recounting the birth of triplets. He ended his narrative in this remarkable fashion:—"Great sympathy is felt for the father, who is a hard-working man, and much respected in the neighbourhood."

"Don't you eat tart?" he asked the young man who sat next to him in the restaurant. "Oh, yes." "But you don't take any." "He said apricot tart." "But what's the matter with apricot tart?" "Why, I'm the grocery clerk who sold him the tinned apricots, and gave him 20 per cent. off because we had had the tins in stock three years."

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To the Editor of the WOMAN'S SIGNAL.
DEAR MADAM,—Will you allow me to answer "M. E. M." through your columns? I should be very glad if she would write to me direct, as I am desirous of having correspondents in all parts of England and Wales, and it is very probable she might be able to assist in the work in various ways.
We are very much indebted to you for the manner in which you are spreading the light in your excellent paper, and I am glad to find the feeling is growing all over the country that the time for action has arrived. May the day soon come when, to quote Mr. Aldis in his admirable pamphlet, "Sham Liberalism," the women of England will "resolve that they will never give any electioneering support to a man who is ready enough to put upon them all the dirty drudgery of committee-room organisation and district canvassing; who thinks they are quite competent to instruct others how to vote, but is not ashamed to maintain that they are by nature or Divine decree incapable of using the vote themselves."—Yours faithfully,
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Edited by
MRS. FENWICK MILLER.

A Weekly Record and Review devoted to the interests of Women in the Home and in the Wider World.

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Principal Contents of this Issue.

- A Book of the Hour:
Mrs. Cowden-Clarke's Life: by Annie Truscott Wood.
- The Future of Women who Work: II.—Can they Save? By Edith A. Barnett.
- Armenian Refugee Fund Notice.
- Current News for and about Women.
- Sale at Peter Robinson's.
- Signals from Our Watch Tower:
Another American State Grants Women Suffrage. Further Testimony from Wyoming. Growth of War Expenses. Liberal M.P.'s and their Local Ladies' Associations. Miss Helen Gladstone on Vivisection. Mrs. Massingberd's Illness. Women Commercial Travellers. The Pope and his Life. Accident to Lady Henry Somerset. Women on County Councils, &c., &c.
- Treasures and Troubles: A Domestic Science Story. Chapters II-III.
- The Art of Listening.
- Economical Cookery: Some Cheese Dishes.
- What to Wear: Illustrated.
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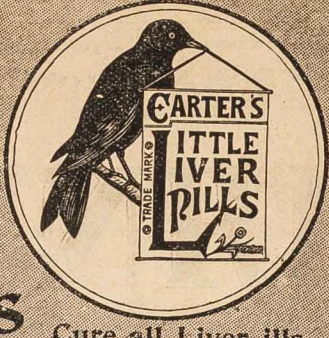
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A BOOK OF THE HOUR. A LONG LIFE.*

By Mrs. COWDEN CLARKE.

(Reviewed by Annie Truscott Wood.)

THE name of Cowden-Clarke brings to my memory a long library; at one end the Sistine Madonna looking down with calm eyes on schoolgirls, idle and industrious. The book-cases stood at right angles to the walls, forming quiet retreats, alike suitable for hard work or forbidden conversation. In one was a shelf devoted to commentaries and books of reference on the works of England's greatest poet. Scanning their backs idly, the name of Cowden-Clarke photographed itself on my unconscious brain.

Mary Cowden-Clarke, the author of a "Complete Concordance to Shakespeare," the "Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines," and many studies of Shakespearian characters, has aptly named her biography "My Long Life," for it is the story of a life which began as far back as the 22nd of June, 1809, when Mary Victoria Novello was born in 240, Oxford-road, as what is now Oxford Street was called. It is the story of a long life from another point of view, for it was a remarkably full life. As Mary Cowden-Clarke unfolds the tale of her days, we are astonished at the patient industry of the girl, who at seventeen became a governess, spent the years of her early married life diligently coaxing the narrow ends of her circumstances to make them meet, helping Charles, her husband, in his work, writing on her own account, making her clothes and her husband's dress waistcoats, and carefully broiling mutton chops for Charles when at one time his health threatened to give way. "Never was mutton chop better broiled," she says proudly. Even in after years, when at ease as regarded money matters, the old habits of diligence were not cast aside, and she has worked steadily on, writing stories, articles, sonnets, &c., although her "other self" was taken from her side in 1877, leaving a blank which nothing could fill.

The first half of this biography is very delightful; it reads like the conversation of some dear old lady whose memory carries her back to the beginning of the century, with the striking difference that few old ladies have reminiscences in which such men as Leigh Hunt, Keats, Shelley, and Lamb have their places. Further on, the interest rather flags, which is perhaps inevitable. The whole of a long life cannot be uniformly fascinating, and it is the early years of Mary Cowden-Clarke's life, passed within the charmed circle of minds like those of Leigh Hunt and Lamb, that the general reader will find most interesting.

The story of her own life, interwoven with that of the whole Novello family and of Charles Cowden-Clarke, "My Charles," is easily and modestly told. It must have been a delightful household; the parents who brought up their children so wisely and sensibly, an example for parents in our day; the mother, adviser and

friend of husband and children; Vincent Novello, hard-working, devoted to music and inspiring all his children with its love and knowledge; those children, Victoria, Cecilia, Clara, Sabilla, Alfred and Edward, all industrious, conscientious, and gifted in varying degrees, content to live simply and earn their own livelihood.

The description of Mary Victoria Novello's early days sounds very quaint. Her walks to Hyde Park and the halfpenny mugs of curds and whey sold near to the Marble Arch; the country waggons which jogged past their house in the evenings; the dimness of the streets at night before gas-lighting was invented.

"Another of our urban delights in those days was watching, from the window of our front-parlour nursery, 'the soldiers' as they passed by from the barracks in Portman-street to parade in Hyde Park. First came a magnificent and imperious drum-major, who, notwithstanding the importance with which he wielded his tall staff of office, seeming solemnly to pick his way with it, used to cast a smiling eye toward the group of young faces that peered admiringly over the low green blind at him and his brilliant troop preceded by its band of music.

"Opposite to our house was Camelford House, where Prince Leopold and Princess Charlotte resided when in town, and a pleasant sight it used to be to me to watch the Prince with the Princess beside him—he driving his curriole, with its glittering steel bar across the prancing horses, and the outriders in their green and gold Coburg livery—setting forth to take an airing round Hyde-park. Once I saw her going to Court, the indispensable hoop tilted sideways to enable her to take her seat in the carriage, and the equally indispensable huge plume of feathers then required for Court costume. When her early death threw all England into mourning—for no one, however poor, but had at least a scrap of crape about them—my father set to music Leigh Hunt's touching verses—'His departed love to Prince Leopold.'

Mrs. Cowden-Clarke recounts many fascinating parties, but few more delightful than those held in Oxford-street, which she describes thus:—

"The evening parties at 240, Oxford-street, were marked by a judicious economy, blended with the utmost refinement and good taste; the supper refection was of the simplest—Ella's 'Chapter on Ears' eloquently recording the 'friendly supper-tray' and draught of 'true Lutheran beer,' which succeeded to the feasts of music provided by the host's playing on the small but fine-toned chamber organ, which occupied one end of the graceful drawing-room. This was papered with a delicately-tinted pink colour, showing to advantage the choice water-colour paintings by Varley, Copley Fielding, Havell and Cristall that hung around. These artists were all personally known to Vincent Novello, and were not frequent visitors on these occasions. The floor was covered by a plain grey druggel, bordered by a beautiful garland of grapes and vine leaves, designed and worked by my mother herself. Besides the guests above named, there were often present Charles and Mary Lamb, Leigh Hunt, John Keats, and ever-welcome, ever young-hearted Charles Cowden-Clarke. My enthusiasm—child as I was—for these distinguished visitors was curiously strong. I can remember once creeping round to where Leigh Hunt's hand rested on the back of the sofa upon which he sat, and

giving it a quiet kiss—because I heard he was a poet. And I have even now full recollection of the reverent look with which I regarded John Keats, as he leaned against the side of the organ, listening with rapt attention to my father's music. Keats' favourite position—one foot raised on his other knee—still remains imprinted on my memory; as also does the last time I saw him, half-reclining on some chairs that formed a couch for him when he was staying at Leigh Hunt's house, just before leaving England for Italy. Another poet reminiscence I have—of jumping up to peer over the parlour window-blind to have a peep at Shelley, who I had heard was leaving, after a visit he had just paid to my father upstairs. Well was I rewarded, for, as he passed before our house, he gave a glance up at it, and I beheld his seraph-like face with its blue eyes, and aureoled by its golden hair."

It is interesting to note that Mrs. Cowden-Clarke had a somewhat superior education to that of most girls in those days. She was taught Latin by Mary Lamb, who offered to give the little girl lessons in Latin and reading aloud. The latter art Mary Lamb possessed to perfection, and, after the lapse of so many years, Mrs. Cowden-Clarke still remembers the tone of voice in which she used to begin Milton's "Paradise Lost." Other lessons in Latin and arithmetic were given to Victoria by an old Scotch gentleman, who was engaged to teach her brothers, Alfred and Edward. Her education was completed by a stay in Boulogne-sur-Mer, where she was sent to acquire a thorough knowledge of French. She seems to look back upon this sojourn in France with keen delight. Here is her description of M. Bonnefoy, her old schoolmaster.

"Old Monsieur Bonnefoy was one of the most excellent of tutors, and certainly one of the most simple-minded of men. The naive way in which he allowed himself to be supposed utterly unaware of the preparations for a due celebration of his birthday (which was kept, according to Continental custom, on his namesake Saint's day, the feast of St. Pierre) was quite remarkable. The boys were allowed to go into the fields and gather armfuls of Marguerites without M. Bonnefoy noticing that his scholars did not come to school at the usual hour; his entering the schoolroom with complete ignorance of the boy mounted on a chair behind the door, ready to drop a daisy crown on his master's head, and wholly unprepared for the shout of applause that was to burst from the assembled concourse of scholars when the coronation feat was accomplished, formed a triumph of utter unconsciousness."

On her return from Boulogne, Mary was engaged to teach the children of a Mrs. Purcell, who treated the young girl with great consideration. However, the constant care of five young children and her nervous desire to please told upon her health, and the situation had to be given up. Meanwhile Charles Cowden-Clarke, who had always been Mary Victoria's friend, declared himself her lover, and on the 1st of November, 1826, they were betrothed, she being but 17, whilst he was over 30. They were married when she was not quite 20.

In the account of their starting for their honeymoon we get again that wonderful literary twang that gives to the reminiscences of this

* "My Long Life," by Mary Cowden Clarke. Published by T. Fisher Unwin, London. Price, 7s. 6d.