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The Dawn Club.

A Social Reform Club for Women.

On Thursday the 28rd May, at the invitation of Mrs. Lawson, a few ladies met at the Foresters' Hall, to endeavour to start a club or association of women.

Though no programme had been so much as suggested, all those present were practically of unanimous opinion as to the necessity to form a woman's union, and of one mind as to the work to which such a union should devote itself. A merely social club or place of town resort for women is not intended, but to amalgamate women for mutual development, for mutual aid, and for the consideration and forwarding of various questions of importance to the sex, is roughly the purpose of the club.

At the first meeting Mrs. Gent spoke of a case which had recently come under her notice. An ignorant country girl who had been seduced, had been turned out of her home and sent down to the city to take her chance. Her friends, who should have been most ready to shield and forgive her, sent her, utterly inexperienced and penniless as she was, to grapple with the problem of existence in Sydney streets. Though, about to become a mother, the replies of the girl showed clearly enough her utter ignorance of the consequence of her foolishness and her absolute want of that teaching in simple facts which might have preserved her.

It was generally agreed that in a vast number of cases the common treatment of such unfortunate girls by society, was unjust and infinitely too harsh and un pitying.

Mrs. Kingsbury remarked on the great change of public opinion in recent years, which made it now possible to introduce and publicly discuss the Woman's Question. Some years ago, a speaker on Woman's Suffrage received no hearing, and met from the press nothing but ridicule.

During the afternoon, samples of the cellular cloth were exhibited by Mr. I. E. Billing. Those who had used it, spoke of it very favourably, and many decided to try it.

Miss Holden gave some valuable hints on sanitary clothing, and hygiene generally. She also spoke on the subject of a Home for Inebriates. Temperance was another subject which received lengthy consideration.

A drawing-room meeting subsequently held at Mrs. Kingsbury's, officers were elected. Two later meetings have been held at Mr. Quong Tart's tea rooms, when members were enrolled, and entrance fees paid.

kind letter was read from Miss Allan, founder and manager of the St. Mary's Club and Institute for Young Women, Islington, London. The hints contained in her letter will be of great value. The club also gratefully acknowledged the receipt from Miss Black, Secretary to the Women's Trades' Union and Provident League, of a number of *Women's Union Journals*, and other papers relating to women's trade associations. A vote of thanks to Mr. Tart for the use of the room, was passed, and in addition to much discussion as to the work of the club, some papers were read. The President's paper on Woman's Suffrage is printed in another part of this issue, and the Vice-president read the following brief paper which outlines the hopes of the promoters of this club, and roughly, the purpose of the association.

Nothing that concerns humanity can be indifferent to us.

- For the cause that needs assistance
- For the wrongs that need resistance
- For the future in the distance
- For the good that we can do.

Our object to my mind is this—To gather together a nucleus of those women who, having themselves faced the realities of life, in its work, its poverty, its trials, have or hope they have, gained through these things, useful experience which might help others in the same battlefield. Who think they see mistakes which might be corrected, ignorance which might be helped, inexperience which might be taught, aspirations after usefulness, which might be guided into fruitful channels, desire for more light on many subjects closely connected with woman's, and therefore humanity's well-being, which might be most usefully encouraged and supplied by those who, through various channels and varied spheres of effort, have painfully gathered the wider experimental 'more light' which others have had no opportunity of gaining, but which they need. Upon such subjects as the healthy rearing of children; the true aim and how to obtain it, of education; the bearing of physiological knowledge upon every day life; the immense influence of bodily conditions upon the mind and the spirit; the encouragement of simple healthful modes of dress, of simple healthful food. The most practical methods of checking larrikinism and vicious tendencies at the root; the direction of attention to the best modes of meeting the wants of the sick poor, whether encouraging them to go into hospitals instead of encouraging them nurse their sick at home is wise or has good results in the end. The encouragement of girls to choose domestic service to a greater extent than at present, as better for their future lives as wives and mothers. The helping on by sympathy and whatever practical influence can be brought to bear, of temperance, social purity, and all connected with these subjects, and plainness and simplicity of life, as opposed to luxury and extravagance. The inculcation of 'plain living and high thinking,' all these subjects are open to discussion, suggestion and action, upon the ground of lived experience and also upon the ground that it is their root causes which need attack rather than their fall-blown effects.

We think we can sow the germ of this effort, by com-

the Chicago Times of January 13th says of them.

"In Kansas women are authorized to vote at Municipal elections and the exercise of this right has resulted very happily to the town of Oskaloosa. The town was infested by a corrupt board of Aldermen, when, partly in jest and partly in earnest, it was proposed to turn these delinquent and unpleasant officials out and substitute for them a Mayor and Board of Aldermen composed of women. The women were elected. Nearly a year of administration has resulted happily for the town. Order prevails, robbery has disappeared. The ordinances are enforced. The taxes are reduced. The women, all matrons, sincere, honest, courageous, and intelligent, have devoted themselves with skill and address to the affairs of the corporation. The one railroad of the town, which used to have its own way, proffered passes to the women authorities, which were rejected with quiet dignity, much to the surprise of its officers, who speedily found themselves compelled to pay close attention to the municipal regulations which they had habitually disregarded. The City Treasury once depleted, has now a balance. In a word, honesty and intelligence have characterized the administration of Oskaloosa under the sway of women."

The Lady Mayor and Council-women were recently re-elected by sweeping majorities and four other towns in Kansas have since followed the example of Oskaloosa.

Thus facts against theories show nothing to woman's disadvantage; they are I am glad to say, a happy presage of a better future.

Twenty five years ago women (with insignificant exceptions) could not vote anywhere. To-day they have school suffrage in 13 of the American States, municipal suffrage in Kansas, and full suffrage at Wyoming. In Ontario New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and British Columbia they have the municipal suffrage, and last January two million women voted in England Scotland and Wales at the election of County Councils under the new system of local government. They only need one step more, while we are far behind. It remains for the women of Australia to say how long they will lag in the rear of the great onward march of liberal thought and women's advance. We have three examples: now we only need our own efforts.

The Corset Question.

From Good Health.

Dr. J. H. Kellogg, of Battle Creek, Mich. has published the results of experiments made with his pneumograph, an ingenious little instrument which records automatically by zigzag lines the movement of the body in breathing. The tracings resemble the diagrams made by pulse movement, and recorded on smoked glass by the wellknown pulsometer. He finds that the civilized woman is the only one who breathes with the upper part of her chest. The chief movement of the body in all other human creatures is abdominal. Diagrams of the "respiration records" made by a man, a Scotch unmarried woman who had never worn corsets, a Chickasaw Indian woman, a Mexican Indian woman and others, all show little movement of the upper part of the chest, large movement of the lower part. A man who wore a corset, and an Indian girl and a civilized girl similarly constricted, all reversed the natural order, and breathed with the upper part almost entirely. Dr. Kellogg says—"The movement of the ribs is as much necessary to breathing as the movement of the diaphragm, and how are the ribs to move freely, if the lower part of them be closely confined by a waist-band or corset? . . . A woman

should be able to expand her lungs as well with her clothing on as she can do, without her clothing at night.

D. A. Sargent in *Scribner's*, says—

"In order to ascertain the influence of tight clothing upon the action of the heart during exercise, a dozen young women consented to run 540 yards in their loose gymnasium garments, and then to run the same distance with corsets on. The running-time was 2 minutes, 30 seconds for each person at each trial. Before running, the average heart impulse was 84 beats to the minute; after running, the heart impulse was 152 to the minute, the average natural waist-girth being 25 inches. The next day, corsets were worn, and the average girth reduced to 24 inches. The same distance was run in the same time by all, and the average heart impulse was found to be 168 beats per minute. When I state that I should feel myself justified in advising an athlete not to enter a running or rowing race whose heart impulse was 160 beats per minute after a little exercise, even though there were not the slightest evidence of disease, one can form some idea of the wear and tear on this important organ, and the physiological loss entailed upon the system in women who force it to labour for over half their lives under such a disadvantage as the tight corset imposes.

In order to ascertain the effect of tight clothing upon respiration, the spirometer was tried. The average natural girth of the chest over the ninth rib, was 28 inches, and with corsets, 26 inches. The average lung capacity, when corsets were worn was 134 cubic inches; when the corsets were removed, the test showed an average lung capacity of 167 cubic inches—a gain of 33 cubic inches. Who can estimate its value to the entire system?

The effect of tight clothing upon the functions of the stomach, liver, and other abdominal viscera has long been known to physicians. Could my fair readers know the importance of the organs, compressed and displaced by the waist-band and the part they play, not only in administering to the welfare of the body, but in influencing thoughts and feelings, and really enhancing life's pleasures, they would certainly need no argument to convince them that it would be worth while to give these agents a fair chance to perform the work that nature imposes on them."

BRAIN-RUST

Sir James Crichton-Browne, when lecturing on "Brain-Rust" at the Midland Institute at Birmingham, called in question the wisdom of the compulsory retirement and pension dispensation under which we live. He had, he said, several cases of mental disease induced solely by enforced idleness in men turned out of the public service in conformity with a fixed rule, while still in the height of brain-power, and capable of useful work. He had no surer way of inducing premature senility than to send a man of an active temperament to retire and do nothing when just past the zenith of life, and he might have said, surer way of enjoying a green and vigorous old age, than to keep on working till its close. Sir James drew attention to the longevity of the Judges, and to the sustained brain-friction protected them against the effects of brain-rust. They would never fall into the category of those who, while holding office, constantly called for the most intellectual exertion in considering bills, and were submitted to them, and although almost all of them died at one period of their lives been subjected to the most severe strain, yet they suffered from dementia, or any other disease almost any other class of the profession.

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