

## Editorial Reflections

### *Something About Ourselves*

**T**HE LADIES' MIRROR! In the multiplicity of New Zealand publications is there room for a journal devoted entirely to the interests of women? Room! There is absolute necessity; for in this wide Dominion, which can boast more papers to the square inch than any other national entity, while masculinity is catered for in every phase, trade, profession, federation of employers, union of workers, farm, garden, orchard, each having its special advocate, no attempt has been made, until this our first issue, to satisfy the craving which exists in the heart of every thoughtful woman for a medium which will give expressions to her own desires, aspirations and ideals. And that is the reason for this paper coming into being.

New Zealand, from the days of that great pro-consul, Sir George Grey, led the van in the feminist movement, blazed the trail that the whole world has since followed, and showed that not only was woman fit to give considered expression to her views on matters affecting the body politic, but that in the mere exercise of that right she could go far towards clearing the mire and mirk which rendered statecraft a nasty business. Woman's natural intuition, her love of the cleanly and decent at home and abroad, have now for four decades been of uncontested value in the growth of progress of this Britain of the South. But the tide of feminism has rolled past us unheeding; from the crest we have steadily receded to the trough, and nations which regarded our experiment of the 'eighties with distrust and alarm have badly distanced us in recognition of the claims of womankind. The sex has thus been left in the backwash here, very largely because it has remained without a rallying point—lacking a medium for the expression of the devices and desires of its heart, its claims have been foregone. That disability no longer exists, and with the appearance of *The Ladies' Mirror* woman becomes vocal, her views upon every question which impinges upon the orbit of her daily life will find expression here. The daily and weekly journals have given up a little of their space to the most industrious section of their readers, but not sufficient to touch the fringe of the many questions affecting women to-day. No such limitation will be imposed in our case; women's interests alone will be considered, and in the ample space within our covers the whole gamut of the activities of the sex will be run.

### *What We Aim At*

**W**OMAN'S supreme and unchallenged domain is the home—feminine art and grace have their abiding place here, and within its walls are mirrored the very soul of its chatelaine. We will have much to say concerning the Home Beautiful, many suggestions to offer for its adornment. The art that conceals art finds its fullest expression within the human habitation; the grouping of furnishings, the best use of the decorative opportunities offered by corner or inglenook, the blending of colour or the riot of contrast, the relationship of the lighting to the best "pieces," these and a hundred similar touches reveal the taste, or the lack of it, of the keeper of the door. It will be our endeavour, based upon experience allied to cultivated instinct, to so guide the wayfarer along the pathway of artistic consideration that the most effective use may be made of the materials available in every home. In this far-flung scrap of earth that is forever England, we have broken the barriers of caste and have become an inter-related community to a degree undreamed of in other climes. Therefore we read with peculiar interest of the social doings of our neighbours. Our chronicles of the leading events of the month will be ample and inclusive, effectively covering society gatherings and functions of interest in the four centres. Our readers, too, will be able to anticipate the mode of the moment and to keep *au fait* with all that is doing in the great fashionable

world outside. Our illustrated descriptions of the latest "creations" of the costunier will be on a scale not attempted elsewhere, and we can safely promise that those who follow the lead we give will be in step with all that is new and attractive. Art, the theatre, needlework, cookery and the vast general field of the thoughts and doings of the womenfolk of New Zealand will be covered by specialists in their own line, and it is our firm belief that, taken as a whole, *The Ladies' Mirror* will prove the most interesting piece of literature available as a record of these activities. In conclusion, it is our aim to make our production wholesome, to be charitable and helpful and sympathetic, to be strong and womanly, and generally to cover, in as complete a way as possible, all that interests a hitherto uncatered-for clientele.

### *"Better Times"—The Woman's Aspect*

**T**HE tide is turning! There is a better time ahead! The magic spirit of these words, so frequently quoted of late, gives a mental uplift that is like the spring song of the bell-bird after a cold, grey winter—like the crocus gleam through the bare earth—like the abundant plum blossom in the orchard—the spirit of hope and courage, of beauty and plenteousness.

"If you want to be cheerful, jes' set yer mind on it and do it," said the greatest as well as homeliest of woman philosophers, "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," and it is a pity that she has not a larger army of followers. Never was she at a loss. Even if the child got into the rain barrel and the cupboard was bare when visitors appeared, she had a smile and a cheery word for all—not excepting her unruly but very lovable brood. For she knew that there is always some way out of a difficulty, and that a smile generally points to the door hidden in the darkness.

And woman's smile and encouraging word mean so much to a man—some man. They have always been mighty factors in his work. Neither may have realised it, but the truth remains.

**N**EW Zealand women are the daughters of pioneers. And what pioneers they were! Dainty, fragile and delicate, they had the courage of heroes. Just imagine, you women of to-day with a water-tap over your kitchen sink. How would you like to walk a mile through dripping wet tussocks and flax to fetch the household water in a pail, with a weeping, protesting toddler dragging at your skirt as well? But they did it often, these brave, wonderful women—your parents and mine. And they smiled, and hoped for the better times which—sure enough—came to them. And their men were heartened for their daily work, and their children—well, we know what fine men and women they bred.

**I** LOVE to think of those great-hearted gentlewomen who were almost the first to land on the wild bush-bound coast of Otago—how they lived at first in a tent on the shingly beach (there was no other place)—how they lined one big tent with curtains brought from their beautiful drawing-room in the Old Country, and arranged their boxes to make a table, and so made the first real home in the South Island. And though all cooking had to be done outside, their hospitality never failed, nor the warmth of their welcome. Hard days had to be faced, but always that little band of women played their quiet but cheerful part. There were no repinings, no regrets for the dear land they had left—at least their husbands were not worried by them.

That was in 1848, and after. Here, in the North, our pioneer women went through similar experiences, and shall we, their children, be weaker than they? Never! We have had our time of sorrow, but the war is over, and the depression that followed is passing. Let us look forward to the days that are to come with happy confidence in the prosperity of our wonderful country, and, with cheery optimism, face the future that is so full of glorious possibilities.