

A REFINING INFLUENCE?

Women On Education Boards

EVER since the days of Jane Eyre, when governing, apart from marriage, was the only career open to a young lady of gentle birth, teaching has been one of the most popular professions for women. But in spite of the fact that so many women in New Zealand, those who teach and those whose children are taught, are intimately concerned with the theory and practice of education, very few of them up to now have shown a disposition to play their part on the governing bodies of educational institutions.

Although women have from the beginning been admitted as students to the University of New Zealand it was not till 1938 that a woman graduate — Dr. Sylvia Chapman—first took her seat on the Senate of the University. "My arrival was hailed with delight by all the male members of the Senate," she said at a women's gathering recently "who made remarks such as 'At last we're going to get the Woman's Point of View.' I'm afraid they must have been rather disappointed, for in the three and a-half years I've been on the Senate I haven't needed to speak from the woman's angle at all. On most of the questions discussed there hasn't been a woman's angle.

The Principle of Proportion

"The most important business of the Senate is the making and amending of the Statutes of the New Zealand University, which is about as interesting as the making and mending of one's stockings, and up to 1938 this work was carried out quite successfully by men. There's no reason why it shouldn't be, except that I feel that where there's work to be done women might as well take their share of it. The value of women on the Senate comes from their being graduates, not from their being women.

"So far no question has arisen on the Senate which affects women students only, nor have I yet had an outside request to present to the Senate any particularly feminine point of view. But it is quite possible that such a question and such a need may arise. However, in my opinion the important thing is that the number of women on the governing bodies of the University should be in proportion to the number of women students."

If we admit Dr. Chapman's principle of proportion as equally applicable to the governing bodies of our primary and secondary schools we are forced to acknowledge that up till now few women have sufficient awareness of their educational responsibility. The proportion of women on New Zealand school committees is perhaps one in ten, and there are no women on any of the education boards. And these facts are in proportion neither to the boy-girl ratio in our classrooms nor to the number of female teachers serving under our education boards.

But all women except the most rabidly anti-feminist of us will be pleasantly warmed by the news that for the first

time in its history two women are standing as candidates for the Wellington Education Board.

"Why?" we asked one of them.

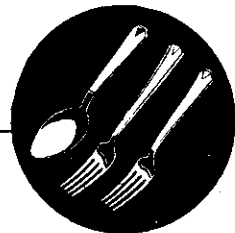
"A strong sense of duty," she replied. "I feel that we ought to have women on our education boards, since so many women are closely connected through their children with what goes on in the schools. The education boards, after all, select the men and women who are to teach our children, and that's rather important to all mothers. Apart from that the boards seem to deal with all questions of school expenditure — improvements in school buildings and playgrounds—and that's another matter that should concern the mothers of school pupils."

Dull, But Necessary

A great part of the board's work is unspeakably tedious, the speaker continued. "As far as I can judge from my school committee experience the board seems to have to deal with a number of small problems such as replacing a furnace that doesn't work, filling up a hole

in the school playground, getting tenders for the erection of a new shelter shed. All these problems are the subject of lengthy correspondence between the School Committee and the board. I feel that a woman on the board could well use her influence to cut to a minimum negotiations between committee and board and get necessary work done quickly.

"But every now and then a moral issue does arise," she went on. "Sometimes it is necessary to inquire into the conduct of a certain teacher or to decide on some particular line of policy, and it is on these larger issues that I think a woman's opinion is needed. And this is my chief reason for wanting to get on the Education Board. I don't suppose I shall enjoy the work—they tell me that meetings go on for hours, and I don't imagine that knitting is encouraged. But if the business is boring it's necessary, and I think that women should be as ready as men to bear the burdens as well as share the privileges of holding office."



SPOONS and FORKS

Resplendent spoons and forks on snowy damask, complete the setting of your table. Silver and plated ware in every day use cleaned the quick, easy Silvo way will shine with a new loveliness.



A Reckitt's Product

SO14

Banish Acidity

WITH

JIC

THE RELIABLE STOMACH REMEDY!

2/- 3/- Everywhere.

20

Lady, we salute you!

Salute to a woman in uniform! She earns it by the job she does. Earns it again by the way she looks. Impeccable grooming, shining competence ... one of an army of many smart girls.

Good looks in uniform depend upon a Berlei to tactfully suit austere lines to feminine curves. Competence depends largely upon a woman's ability to stand up to long hours and unremitting strain. Here again, Berlei's her faithful ally. The well-corseted figure, women war-workers have discovered, can take it! A Berlei braces delicate, unaccustomed muscles against strain ... keeps the body in good posture so that it tires less quickly. No war-working woman, however strong, however fit she may imagine herself, should be without a Berlei!

