

## Correspondence.

(The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents.)

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—In recent numbers of the "White Ribbon" reference has been made to the report on the education of girls adopted by the Council of Education and endorsed by the N.Z. Women Teachers' Association at its annual meeting.

May I, as one of your readers, and as representing a large body of women teachers, give your members something of our point of view?

The criticism against the report is, I believe, largely the result of misconception of the facts. The days when girls had to "do nothing but wait for some man to come along and provide the house for them to keep" are past, and—we sincerely hope—never to return. Girls are being trained—and rightly so—to become capable wage-earners, but while we remember that they must be able to maintain their independence, we must not forget that the great majority of them will eventually marry, and that the home life of the nation will depend on them. It is true that differentiation in the education of girls is stressed in the report, but that is because it is realised that such a policy is in the interests, firstly, of the girls themselves, and secondly, of the nation.

The aim of education should be to fit boys and girls for the duties of mature life, and a system can only be successful in so far as that aim is assured. It has long been the custom to consider mainly, in planning educational systems, the needs of boys. Is it not time that more serious thought was given to the educational needs of the mothers of the coming race?

No amount of argument will alter the fact that the girls in our schools will become the mothers of the nation—that into their hands will come the work of rearing and training the next generation. I am one of those who believe that no other task that falls to the lot of frail humanity equals this one in importance and in far-reaching results. Is the present system providing girls with the best equipment for undertaking this task? We think there is room for improvement, and that the report points the direction in which improvements may be made. Shall we send girls away from our schools ill-equipped to face these responsibilities, that will most surely devolve upon them, or shall we give them a helping hand, as far as we may, in preparing them for these duties?

There is nothing revolutionary in the report, and one would expect that the proposal to widen the home aspect of a girl's education, and to place around her during the years of adolescence the influence of a capable woman teacher, would have received

nothing but approbation from women who are interested in the national welfare. For this is but one phase of education, not the whole. No one proposes to rob girls of a sound education in a literary sense, nor to prevent them from qualifying for any trade or profession they may wish to follow. But we are deeply concerned with the home life of the nation, for we know how much depends upon it, and if we are to be loyal to our womanhood, we cannot disregard it.

There may be a few people who would forget that boys and girls have not all the same duties to perform. Such look askance at any ideas of "sex differentiation in education," but I think there are very few indeed who would recommend that in all our schools there be no differentiation; that boys and girls alike be taught needlework, laundry, cookery, woodwork, and every other subject contained in the primary school syllabus.

The great human wastage that is now going on makes it more than ever necessary that the coming race shall be fit and virile, and we must use every means in our power to that end. The education of both boys and girls is a matter of the deepest moment. In considering that of the girls, there are three aspects to be noted:

- (1) The **citizen** aspect.
- (2) The **home** aspect.
- (3) The **wage-earning** aspect.

Our women must be trained to be good citizens, good mothers, and capable workers. A system that weaves these three strands into a harmonious whole is what we are striving after, and if the aim is an exalted one, we have good authority for saying that "Who aims at the sky shoots higher far than he who means a tree."

The Dominion Conference of Women Teachers, representing various Associations from Auckland to Invercargill, met in Wellington recently and passed, with only one dissentient, the following motion:—"That this Conference of delegates from the Women Teachers' Associations heartily approves of the principles embodied in the report of the Council of Education on the education of girls, and trusts that the Minister of Education will put these principles into operation as soon as possible."

I would therefore ask that your readers, and the W.C.T.U. generally, will consider carefully the underlying principles of the report of the Council of Education on the education of girls. The experienced women teachers at the Conference were all agreed as to the wisdom of the proposals, and they spoke with considerable practical knowledge. I know, too, that the women members of the Council of Education did their share of committee work in framing this report with a deep sense of responsibility, and I feel that an Association of Women workers having for its motto, "For God, and Home, and Humanity," cannot but give sympa-

thetic attention to such a report as this.

I append a copy of the report, and hope I may be pardoned for taking up so much of your space.

Thanking you in anticipation, I am, etc.,

EMILY A. CHAPLAIN,

President N.Z. Women Teachers' Association (also member Council of Education).

## ON THE CONVENTION.

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—I read your fine Convention number with interest, but if you will kindly allow me to say so, I would like to have seen some remarks on:—

(1) "The Rights of the Children" emphasised. That is the right of these little immigrants to our world to full citizenship of our State immediately they come. The right to full food, clothing, lodging, medical attendance, education, and training, and land, with a State guarantee that they get them.

(2) "On thinking good thoughts." Is it not the faith that is in us that tells? Thoughts are from two sources (a) our own personal experiences, including what we are told and read; (b) outside impressions from our Creator, and our fellows' faith. Thoughts may be anything—but faith only can remove mountains. If we set our faith it continues to work even though we may be thinking about other things.

(3) "The cost of living." I would like to have seen the basic principle of living and its relation to the land affirmed.

"The earth is the Lord's"—**not the landlord's**. "The earth is the Father's table," and it is the **artificial** divorce of three fourths of "The Father's children" from the land that makes the cost of living burdensome.—I am, etc.,

SAM. A. BROWNE.

Clevedon, Auckland,  
April 30th, 1917.

(To the Editor.)

Dear Madam,—At our meeting of the committee in connection with the Manifesto held to-day, it was decided that we keep Empire Week as a special week of prayer for our new Campaign. That all the ministers be asked to preach special sermons on Sunday 20th, and that the congregations be asked to pass a resolution asking for Prohibition during the period of the war, and for six months thereafter.

During the week following, either in the evening or afternoon, we arrange special prayer meetings at the different churches to pray for Prohibition on the lines of the Manifesto. It was suggested that it would be a good thing if that week could be kept by our Unions throughout the Dominion. Trusting that great success may attend our efforts.—I remain, yours sincerely,

N. DEWAR.