

Correspondence.

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

THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

(To the Editor).

Dear Madam,—I do not wish to enter into any long controversy on the subject of differentiation in the education of girls. I think my letter stated pretty clearly my views on the subject, but in justice to myself, may I refer the writer of the article in the June number to an article which appeared on the first page of the January number? A reference is there made to the Council of Education's recommendations, and their subsequent endorsement by a conference of women teachers.

This is one of the articles I had in my mind when writing.

With both writers in the June issue, I am at one in the belief that girls should have the widest educational opportunity, but I believe that this must be done with due recognition of that preparation for life specially needed by the mothers of the race. I cannot subscribe to the idea that the fathers and the mothers need exactly the same educational training, though much of it may be on similar lines. It is certainly just as necessary that boys should be trained for the responsibilities of fatherhood as that girls should be trained for the duties of motherhood, but the training required for both, though equally important, is not identical.

One of the greatest needs to-day is expressed in that aim of the World's W.C.T.U.: "To preserve the home and to safeguard child life."

Few of us can feel any satisfaction with the present condition of things, and the resolutions I referred to in my last letter dealt with the matter from a practical standpoint.—I am, etc.,

EMILY A. CHAPLIN, B.A.,
President N.Z. Women's
Teachers' Assc.

(We must apologise to Miss Chaplin for incorrect statement. The article in June issue was written away from home, and no "W.R." to hand, the writer forgot that, though the full report had not reached our office, a Press Association message was commented on.—Ed. W.R.)

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—I have read with interest the articles and correspondence on sex differentiation in education, appearing recently in your paper. Miss Chaplin's letter in your May number makes known the fact that the N.Z. Women Teachers' Association, at a conference of delegates, approved of the principle of differentiation in the education of boys and girls, and desired to see it put into immediate operation. In order that your readers

may know that there is also a body of educational opinion strongly opposed to differentiation on sex grounds, I would like the resolution of the Wellington Branch of the New Zealand Educational Institute to have the same publicity as that of the Conference of Women Teachers. The resolution, passed at a largely attended meeting, was as follows:—"That the Wellington branch of the N.Z.E.I. affirms its opinion that the principle that the segregation of the sexes is desirable in the primary schools from Standard III. upwards (adopted in a report by the Council of Education), is fundamentally unsound, and it is based on fallacies regarding the intellectual, moral, and national training of children." This resolution has been forwarded to the Executive of the N.Z.E.I., with a strong recommendation that active steps be taken by the Institute to prevent such principle being enforced in practice, inasmuch as it is believed that such a course would be an educational, and therefore a national, calamity. The resolution has been remitted to all branches of the Institute for general discussion, and the result will be awaited with keen interest by all who value the opinion of our men teachers equally with that of the women. I am sure we are all agreed upon the importance of the education of our boys and girls, and that the women teachers and the women members of the Council of Education, in recommending this alteration, are actuated by the highest motive, disinterested concern for the welfare of our girls and our nation, but as the aim of all feminist movement is to remove sex barriers, it appears to some of us an exceedingly retrograde step to base our educational system upon sex, and so lay the foundation of a morbid sex-consciousness, which cannot fail to react disastrously upon women, and through them upon the nation.

Miss Chaplain refers to (1) the citizen, (2) the home, (3) the wage-earning aspects as three separate considerations, which is, I think, confusing. They are not three, but one, as the second and third are of necessity included in the first. The aim of our educational system, primary, secondary, and university, is to make perfect citizens, and no one is a perfect citizen who is not a good parent and a capable worker. As the girls of this country will be enfranchised citizens, they are entitled to just the same educational advantages as the boys, and vice versa. As we value our freedom, let us struggle to maintain our system of co-education. Thanking you in anticipation.—I am, etc.,

MARGARET GRAHAM.

"THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN."

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—The enclosed clipping from the Sydney "Bulletin" should be widely read, though the writer should have remembered the inexorable law

men invoke, "The sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children," and in remembering that, should have warned young people to restrain themselves. That the effect of their self-indulgence does not stay with them, but punishes innocent children. That, in fact, sensual indulgence is essentially child-murder.

Think of it, young men and women. Self-indulgence is not "a good time," but child-murder and incredible suffering for all concerned. Pause and think! Is it worth while?—I am, etc.,

SAM. A. BROWNE.

Clevedon, Auckland, July 2nd, 1917.

Commonwealth Statistician Knibbs supplied some surprising figures to the Sydney Child Welfare Conference. In Australia, if the average death-rate for the first day after birth were maintained, there would be no kiddies left after 106 days. In all other countries, unless perhaps Maoriland, a shorter period would make corpses of them all. However, the rate falls off rapidly for the first week; then more slowly till the twelfth year. By that time it is only 1-3400th of what it was on the first day. Then it begins to increase again. Australia's mortality for the first year has been falling for the last 30 years. Knibbs suggests that as the first year is so fatal, the end of that period might well be taken as the datum peg for measuring the effective birth-rate: i.e., instead of counting all children born, only the first year's survivors might be reckoned. Australia's survivors are now 93 per cent. of births, as against Chile's 68 per cent. Congenital debility and malformation are the young immigrants' most frequent enemies—a fact which some good folk who reckon that venereal disease is "punishment for sin" might paste in their hats. Also, having discovered what "sin" the poor little immigrants have committed, they might paste that in their hats, too.

CANTERBURY PROVINCIAL CONVENTION.

Mrs Lill, Secretary of above, writes that Convention will meet at Ashburton on September 4th and 5th. Will Unions having resolutions to bring forward, or papers suitable for reading at Convention, forward same to Mrs Lill before the end of July? Also names and addresses of delegates (every Union entitled to send two delegates). Any Union wishing to entertain Convention in 1918 please bring or send in writing. The levy of 1d per member for Secretary's expenses is now due. Address Mrs W. T. Lill, Willowby, Ashburton.