

CONCLUSION—

Considering, that Neighbourhood Guilds can be started on small funds and on a small scale; that in all towns and villages, the want makes itself felt of joint work between possessing and the non-possessing classes; that everywhere people may be found who are willing and ready to devote part of their time, their money, and their talents to promote the interests of others, it is desirable in my opinion that everywhere in our country, Neighbourhood Guilds should be formed.

Moved by M. H. RUTGERS-HOITSEMA, ROTTERDAM.

THE INFLUENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF VEGETARIANISM :—

Vegetarianism promotes health, happiness, human sympathies and civilisation.

Moved by A. VERSCHOOR, ROTTERDAM.

AWAY WITH VIVISECTION :—

Vivisection is an evil that must be swept away!

Moved by MARIE JUNGIUS, SCHEVENINGEN.

THE FEMALE LABOURER FIGHTING ALCOHOLISM :—

I.—The Female Labourer (*i.e.*, the working woman of the non-possessing classes) being the principal victim of wide spread alcoholism, must be made alive to the ruin caused by strong liquors.

II.—Not till she has been roused to the consciousness of her economical position, in the common produce and division of labour, she will cease to be a non-valuer amongst those who are militant to the struggle.

Moved by M. MENDELS, ZWOLLE.

WOMAN FIGHTING ALCOHOL IN SCHOOL, SUNDAY SCHOOL AND TOYNBEE CLUB :—

I.—It is a woman's duty and right to take a powerful share in the struggle.

II.—In a school, she can only do so occasionally.

III.—Sunday Schools, because they lead to contact with the parents of the children, offer more opportunities.

IV.—Also in the Toynbee Clubs, especially through the system in which those clubs work, women can more directly fight the enemy.

CONCLUSION—

The influence of women in the struggle may be called very great. Therefore it is an urgent duty of those who are aware of this fact, to try and convince the antagonists, to enlighten the ignorant, and to rouse the indifferent.

Moved by J. W. DE KOSTER, ROTTERDAM.

A Book of the Week.

"SILENCE."*

MISS WILKINS has published yet another volume of her wonderful New England stories. It is quite marvellous how, with such a comparatively narrow choice of subjects—for all her tales are of the humbler walks of life—of the little things and homely tragedies that make up life among the poorer inhabitants of New England, she should yet contrive to be so varied, and never to tire the reader with repetition.

The story which gives its title to the volume, is by no means the best. The gem of the collection is "Evelina's Garden;" indeed, I am not sure that it is not the very best that she has yet achieved.

It is not fair to an author to tell the plot of such a beautiful story as this; but it is doing no injustice to

* "Silence." By Mary E. Wilkins. Harpers.

say that it partly turns upon the silent tragedies lived through by women, in the days when for a woman to betray any feeling of any kind was the cardinal sin. What heart-aches, what dull hopeless misery, must have existed behind the sweet demure faces, and big rose-coloured bonnets! What struggles, what unutterable longings to "overstep the bounds of maidenly decorum,"—that is, not actively to repulse the man whom you ardently loved.

Poor Evelina! Poor starved soul, poor wasted affection, and thwarted destiny! Somehow this quiet story, so free from denunciation, so gentle in its tone, so plaintive in its absence of strain, emphasizes far more strongly than any amount of diatribes could do, the fearful evils of a very artificial code of manners, and of the secluding and suppressing of women. Nothing lay before the young woman of Evelina's day but to suffer and be still. She could raise neither hand nor foot against the cruel destiny that bound her. Nobody either knew or cared what she wished or wanted; and she was forbidden to express a desire or an opinion.

The first story, "Silence," is artistic, but extremely painful. It is the account of an Indian raid upon a frontier village, in the early settlers' days. A wonderful picture it gives of the austere lives of the village community, of their bare houses, their coarse food, their hardships and privations.

Miss Wilkins' subtle gift of pathos is wonderfully shown in the story called "The little maid at the door." One can hardly believe that anyone could have been so cruel as to ride away and leave the little innocent child to starve; but the fear of witchcraft seems to have fairly turned the brains of the narrow-minded New Englanders at one time.

"Lydia Hersey" is the only one of the tales which is a little like what one remembers to have heard from Miss Wilkins before. "The Buckley lady" is quite original, and in its way very pathetic. A grand gentleman driving in his coach-and-four through the village, sees little Persis Buckley and is fascinated by her beauty. He tells her father to take great care of her, and that when she is grown up, he will come from England and marry her. The simple parents take this promise quite seriously. Persis is, to the best of their poor ability, educated up to the position they suppose she is to fill. When she is twenty-three, her mother dies, with her faith in her daughter's destiny quite undimmed. How Persis is at last released from her gilded captivity, is admirably managed; so is the old father's wrath and humiliation, when he knows that he has been tricked.

Altogether, at this time of the year, when sustained reading is not quite what we want, as we dream away our holidays, these tales are the very thing to recommend.

G. M. R.

WHAT TO READ.

"The British Empire in the Nineteenth Century." By Edgar Sanderson, M.A. Vol. VI.

"Imperial Africa." By Major Moekler-Ferrymara. Vol. I.

"Cuba: A Six Weeks' Tour in 1889." "Nemesis," a Poem." By "Cantab."

"Sir Thomas Browne," and his "Religio Medici." An Appreciation by Alexander Whyte, D.D.

"A Girl of Grit." By Major Arthur Griffiths.

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