

Outside the Gates.**AN IMPORTANT ACT.**

WE record with profound satisfaction that an Act of supreme importance to women has been passed by the New Zealand Legislature, namely, Divorce Amendment Act, which is reserved for the signification of her Majesty's pleasure thereon.

The Act puts husband and wife, with regard to divorce, on terms of perfect equality before the law. Adultery, desertion, habitual drunkenness with neglect of conjugal duties, and penal servitude for attempting the life of the petitioner, are, under the Act, legal grounds for dissolution of marriage on the petition of either party. The married man, and the married woman in New Zealand will, therefore, if the Act receives the Queen's Assent, be on terms of absolute equality before the law, in strong contrast to the position of the married woman in Great Britain who—while her husband may obtain a divorce on the ground of her adultery—has no redress for the same offence unless she can prove, in addition, legal cruelty. A condition of affairs which is most discreditable to the Constitution of this country.

The clause of the new Act in New Zealand, referring to the above points, is as follows:—

Any married person, who at the time of the institution of the suit or other proceeding is domiciled in New Zealand for two years, may present a petition to the court praying on one or more of the grounds in this section mentioned that his or her marriage with the respondent may be dissolved.

(1) On the ground that the respondent has, since the celebration of the marriage, and after the coming into the operation of the Act, been guilty of adultery.

(2) On the ground that the respondent has, without just cause, willfully deserted the petitioner, and without any such cause left him or her continuously so deserted during five years or upwards.

(3) On the ground that the respondent has during four years and upwards been a habitual drunkard, and has either habitually left his wife without means of support, or habitually been guilty of cruelty towards her; or, being the petitioner's wife, has for a like period been a habitual drunkard, and has habitually neglected her domestic duties and rendered herself unfit to discharge them.

(4) On the ground that the respondent has been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment or penal servitude for seven years or upwards for attempting to take the life of the petitioner.

Any married person who has resided in New Zealand for two years may take advantage of the Act.

There can be no doubt that this measure is the direct result of according to women in that country, the Parliamentary vote. We must cordially congratulate the women of New Zealand on the passing of the Act, and, in the name of the women of other nations, offer them our warmest thanks that one of the first uses they have made of their parliamentary privileges, is to obtain equality before the law in this matter.

WOMEN.

At the age of sixty-four that extraordinary woman, the Empress Dowager of China, after having successfully delivered three coups d'état, subdued innumerable revolts, broken all her enemies, and, what is more, all her former friends; after experiencing all the dramatic ups and downs of the tragedy of power, finds herself at length the sole power in China. The fate of Asia is bound up in her lacquered chair and her ivory bâton. If she raise her hand towards the north, Russia will triumph. If, on the contrary, she leans towards those who hold the sea, another era will commence. To what ever side her favour inclines it is doubtful if she will be able to avert a conflict.

Miss Margaret Sun, is the fortunate woman who has been appointed by the Governors, secretary of the Royal Holloway College at Egham. The post is worth £250 a year, so that it is not surprising to learn that 200 candidates presented themselves. The former secretary, Mr. Clifford Smith received a salary of £500 a year, we are glad, however, that the Governors recognise the justice of appointing a woman as secretary to a Woman's College—even if a false basis of economy has prompted their action.

A large attendance gathered at the Annual Conference of the Women's Co-operative Guild, held in the Assembly Hall, Whitechapel.

Mrs. Reddish, of Bolton, presided, and said the aim of co-operators was to make life better worth the living for those who were possessed of small means. They had accomplished a great deal, but hoped to do much more, especially in London. They had already shown that, rightly directed, Capital and Labor were good friends, and that the individual was not absolutely necessary for the working of any industry. The principle of the capitalist was to buy cheap and to sell dear, and to "get on," no matter what might become of others. She made no attack on individuals, because they were but the product of the system, but the latter must work harm to those who were the least able to help themselves. It was this system of "grab and grind" which co-operators were banded together to overcome.

Messrs. Cadbury Brothers, the great cocoa firm, whose works lie near Birmingham, and who are an example of Capital in relation to Labor, have conceded about 750 of their employes an eight hour day. They are now working forty-eight instead of fifty-three and a half hours. This finely managed firm does not anticipate any loss from the change, because in the past the men began at six o'clock and the girls at nine o'clock in the morning. Now they will begin nearer the same time. This will reduce the number of hours the machinery has to be worked, and in the winter there will be a saving in the running of the electric-light dynamos. The piece-workers will not suffer in the least. The breakfast time will be saved, which is a material matter. Messrs. Cadbury will not gain by the changes as a matter of pounds, shillings and pence, except in the health of their workpeople. They know men and women work better during short hours than long hours, and they recognise that the principle of mutual interests pays the master as much as the man.

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