

The three ladies appointed by the County Council as inspectors under the Shop Hours Act are Miss Church, Miss Hildreth, and Miss Stevenson. They will take up their duties with the new year.

Mrs. Creighton has consented to act as a member of the General Committee of the International Crusade of Peace. The objects of the Crusade must commend themselves to all women, and it is a happy coincidence that active steps should be taken to form the International Crusade at this season, which breathes peace and goodwill. The Committee is to be congratulated upon securing Mrs. Creighton's co-operation, as her warm interest in all that makes for the good of humanity, and her business capacity, are well known. The Bishop of London has accepted the Chairmanship of the Executive Committee of the International Crusade of Peace.

Only those who have come into personal contact with the horrors of war can fully realize the widespread misery it causes, not only to those who actively take part in it, but to the women and children, whose homes are desolated, and who, often widows and fatherless, lose all that makes life worth living for them, and are obliged to undergo hardship and privation as refugees in a strange place. Surely it is time that National differences were settled by some more humane method than war.

A meeting of the London Sale Committee of the Irish Industries Association was held recently in London. Lord Arthur Hill presided, and there were present the Dowager Marchioness of Downshire, the Countess of Arran, the Countess of Lucan, Lady Arthur Hill, Mrs. Charles Crawley and Miss D. Roberts. The accounts of the Irish Industries Sale held at St. George's Hall, Liverpool, were submitted, when it appeared that the gross takings were £5661 7s. 3d. This was regarded as most satisfactory, as this amount has never before been reached. The Committee wish to express their sincere thanks to the ladies and gentlemen in and about Liverpool who have so kindly assisted them in every possible way.

A Women's Employment Bureau has been opened, of which Fraulein Heller is the Superintendent, at Berlin 62, Friedrichstrasse. Though it has only been six months in existence it has already done some noticeable good work. In Paris the Franco-English Guild—of which Miss Williams is the head—has an information bureau. The offices of the Guild are at 6, Rue de la Sorbonne.

By permitting 500 ladies to kiss him publicly in the western cities, Lieut. Hobson, the hero of the *Merrimac*, has deeply incensed the Navy Department of the United States.

A training college has been opened in New York where a course of instruction is given to women desirous of learning the art of embalming the dead. From all accounts it must be a lucrative calling for women in America, inasmuch as it is stated that the rate of remuneration for each body embalmed ranges from £3 to £10; and that women have proved to be very proficient in the performance of the necessary details.

A Book of the Week.

"WISDOM AND DESTINY."*

I HAVE just been reading Maurice Maeterlinck's wonderful new book of thoughts, called "Wisdom and Destiny"; and I have been so impressed thereby that I feel as if I want every woman in England following the profession of a Nurse, to read it also. My edition is in French, but I know there is an English translation to be had for those who find it easier to read in their own tongue.

Most of us know Maeterlinck only as the author of that curious and wonderful play called "Pelleas and Melisande," which many of us went to see this autumn. But he is philosopher as well as poet and playwright, and his philosophy is of such a beautiful and helpful character that nobody could read it and not be the better for it. I will try and give some very rough idea of the central argument. It is this: that we ourselves are the arbiters of our own destiny, simply because destiny depends upon character. An event is, after all, just what you have the capacity to turn it into. In a most wonderful passage, which I will translate freely, he says that "Circumstance is the clear water which fortune is constantly throwing to us; and this water has ordinarily in itself neither colour nor perfume; we ourselves have to supply that; and upon ourselves it depends whether the water shall be sweet or bitter, pleasant or foul, flowing or stagnant."

It is, of course, merely the Christian teaching re-stated; but the method of stating is very striking; and the illustration which immediately follows is as vivid as a lightning flash.

What circumstances, he asks, could have been more unpromising than those which surrounded Jesus Christ? Nothing could have been more sordid, nor less likely, as man judges, to call forth the spirit of heroism. "But Jesus Christ meets, by the roadside, a troop of children at play, a woman taken in adultery, a Samaritan; and, as the result of those three meetings, humanity climbs three steps nearer to the measure of the fulness of His Stature."

Surely here are words of inspiration to those who are called to the life of ceaseless sacrifice which, as your Editor often reminds you, is the fate of those who tend the sick. What quantities of clear water does the fountain of circumstance throw forth to those, especially, who nurse private cases!

The nurse enters the stricken household, and nobody there has the least interest, the slightest attention, to spare for her; the trouble, the pressing anxiety of the moment has made everyone so selfish—all they want is somebody who will lay her own identity for the while completely aside, and live for them in their time of strain, and perhaps of agony and desolation.

The nurse who can take hold of this situation, and spend and be spent for her patient, so as to turn the bitter fountain of tears into a healing stream, is surely following as closely in the Footsteps that trod the leprosy-stricken villages of

* "Wisdom and Destiny." By Maurice Maeterlinck.

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