

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE.

Her Majesty Queen Alexandra has sent the following New Year's Message through the Editor of *The Gentlewoman* to the Women of the Empire, especially to those who have lost loved ones in the War:—

"I wish to send to the Women of the Empire at this great crisis in our history a message of hope and consolation for the New Year. You have been through a period of great suffering by the loss of dear ones, and many more sacrifices will yet be demanded of you, but I feel that they will be borne with that patience and fortitude which have supported and sustained you throughout the last five terrible months. You have suffered in a great and just cause, and my earnest prayer is that in your sorrow you may be consoled by the thought that those who are near and dear to you have died like heroes for their King and country. May God pour His infinite blessings upon you in whatever calamities you are called upon to bear until the blessings of Peace once more dawn upon us.

"ALEXANDRA."

QUEEN WILHELMINA ON PRAYER.

Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands has published the following Christmas greeting on Prayer in the form of a leaflet:—

"There is great matter for thankfulness in our great but difficult time. An exalted sense of unity and solidarity manifests itself to us, mutual esteem and co-operation is to be noted in many different spheres, charity is more abundant in proportion as the urgency of the need increases. The necessity for reflection, for prayer, makes itself strongly felt; and prayer is freely and ardently offered up.

"One can conceive no greater contradiction than God's promised redemption and the grief and pain beneath, which at present the whole world is bowed. Yet the light of His eternal, compassionate love never shone more brightly upon us than at this Festival of our Saviour; He took our likeness upon Himself, indeed, in order to bear the misery of which we are witnesses at this moment. As the landscape, flooded with sunshine, is bathed in the luxury of rest and calm, so peace and joy irradiate the heart which unlocks itself before Him as often as the love of Christ shines upon it. For this it is that the angelic host rejoices on the fields of Bethlehem.

"The infant Jesus has always asked for full confidence. He asks for it still continually. Let us have the high courage to offer Him this. Let us with the shepherds draw near in prayer to the crib, near to the Cross, with all our needs and questionings, till at last our questionings are silenced and our prayer and faith pass into adoration.

"WILHELMINA."

The Dutch people have shown the most humanitarian spirit throughout the War.

WOMEN'S WAR CLUBS.

We are pleased to note that the Women's War Club movement is proving so successful. It has been proved essential in this national crisis to provide places where women can meet together, obtain good refreshments at reasonable prices, and, above all, where they can obtain reliable news, and find distraction and recreation. The necessity for the work is obvious. If funds are forthcoming women in all parts of London who have relations at the Front can be helped through this time of almost insupportable tension and anxiety. Lady Henry Somerset has consented to be the President of the Clubs, and Miss Dolben Paul will act as Hon. Secretary.

WOMEN PATROLS.

Much interest has been aroused in the work of Women Patrols started through the agency of the National Union of Women Workers, outlined in a letter signed by Mrs. Creighton and others, dated October 10th, 1914, and the movement then inaugurated has been rapidly developed.

There are now 26 Organizers at work in various districts of England, both urban and rural. The plan hitherto followed has been to send an Organizer on receipt of a request from a Local Committee, formed by a Branch of the National Union of Women Workers, or where such does not exist, by responsible ladies interested in the welfare of girls. The Organizers are trained in London by expert social workers.

The Local Committee gathers together a band of women willing to act as voluntary Patrols, and the Organizer trains them, assigns them their beats and generally supervises their work. The Patrols hold a card signed in the London area by the Chief Commissioner of Police, and in the counties by the Chief Constable acting at the request of the Home Secretary. They also wear a small distinctive badge, but no uniform.

They are then authorized to use every means of persuasion and influence among the young girls in the neighbourhood of the camps, or in the districts where troops are stationed. They endeavour in every way to minimise the harmful result of the undue excitement which has prevailed among these girls in various parts of the country.

The Local Committee and the Organizer make every enquiry as to the counter-attractions open to these girls, such as Clubs, Guilds, Classes, &c., and the Patrols endeavour to place every girl not already known to such in touch with them. In some cases rooms are opened, to which girls can bring their men friends, and enjoy a pleasant talk on winter evenings. In many places Organizers have visited the mothers, at home and in meetings, with very good results.

That the work meets a general want may be judged by the fact that, following on the report of the success of the movement in England, Scotland and Ireland are starting the scheme.

Advice as to the work has also been sought from South Africa and from the Channel Isles.

The movement is warmly welcomed by the Police.

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