

(Poor Law) children in service and other employments. (6) Some problems of outdoor relief. There will be meetings devoted to the consideration of moral questions and for rescue workers, one for educated girls. A paper on the ethics of work—(a) The responsibility of refinement; (b) The temper of the worker. Among the ladies who will read papers or speak are Mrs. Creighton, Lady Laura Ridding, Her Grace Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, Mrs. Sidney Webb, Mrs. Henry Fawcett, Hon. Mrs. A. T. Lytton, Mrs. Eva McLaren, Mrs. Annie Hicks, Lady Battersea, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, Newnham College, Miss Christabel Coleridge, Mrs. T. H. Green.

Mrs. Sidney Webb, in a recent address on Women's Trade Unions, in speaking of the immediate prospects of women's unions, pointed out that men's unions had been in existence 150 years, women's only twenty, and that women had not the great difficulties to face which men experienced in the days when combination was illegal. The worst difficulties now were the selfishness, narrow-mindedness, and indifference to the welfare of their own class which some women displayed. Mrs. Webb concluded by asserting that "women of that type deserved to be kicked by their husbands and oppressed by their employers," which is a somewhat strong way of putting it.

THE GARDENS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ERIN.

There is a very charming article in the current number of the *Englishwoman's Review* on Irish Gardens, which throws an interesting light on the self-supporting efforts made by the ladies of this "most distressful country" to counteract the disastrous effect on domestic finance of political disturbances and agricultural depression. Gardening and flower-growing are essentially womanly occupations, and a woman seems almost as much in her element when she is tending her flowers, as when she is tending her children!

And it gives a new and a romantic interest to the bunches of flowers we may buy if we reflect that these same blossoms from the Emerald Isle are helping to keep demesnes and estates from passing from the hands of their Irish owners—who are so passionately devoted to their homesteads—into the possession of strangers. To all who sympathise with the misfortunes that have come to so many fine noble old Irish families through the troublous events of the past fifteen years, the following little clippings from the pens of Irish ladies who are striving in this new field of woman's labour should prove very interesting. The first quotation comes from "Violet Orchard Farm," Castletownshend, Skibbereen, whence Mrs. Coghill writes:—"I have a violet farm and send away very large quantities per Parcel Post every day. I supply both florists and private customers in all parts of England, Ireland and Scotland—a most profitable trade, and only made possible by means of the Parcel Post. I live five miles from a railway station, and there being no through communication between Skibbereen and Dublin, sending flowers per rail is, for me,

too uncertain a mode of transit for anything so perishable as violets. I also send away daffodils, but they are so much heavier than violets, that I do not find them so profitable, as when the daffodils are plentiful one will only get 2s. for a box, costing 1s. or 1s. 3d. post, which leaves a very small margin for profit after box, label, string, and cultivation have been paid for."

Mrs. Coghill adds that since she began some three years ago, several ladies in the neighbourhood have followed her example. She also frequently sends wreaths and crosses; but the limits of sizes laid down for the Parcel Post make it impossible to send fine ones, and she wishes the authorities could extend the size, and also make a special reduced tariff for garden and dairy produce. Such would be a most useful and popular measure in Ireland.

Snowdrops seem to come next to violets as profitable by Parcel Post. "They are very light, and carry beautifully," writes one of the correspondents of the *Englishwoman's Review*, who sends hers chiefly to Covent Garden, doing them up in little bunches of twenty-five to thirty snowdrops, two or three ivy leaves in each bunch, and getting from 3d. to 7d. per dozen bunches. "They have grown all over my place for years and years; I don't think they were ever planted, as they seem to grow wild. Most people about us have them in quantities, but there are some places quite close to home where they will not grow at all."

Miss Poe, of Harley Park, Callan, Co. Kilkenny, says:—"I believe there is a really good income to be made out of private gardens, if the work is done methodically, and the *quality* of the work is good. Gardening also gives employment to the country people, who, however inclined to learn practical work, have not the opportunity in Ireland, and turns them sometimes from the well-known 'Jack of all trades' into the 'master of one.' At the same time the training process is sometimes difficult, and one has often cause to remember the Spanish proverb that 'one must not expect a south wall on every side of the garden.' The disadvantage is the extreme hard work. No one who has not tried it could realise the ever-increasing work a business such as ours means; the more it succeeds the more there is to do. We can never allow work to accumulate for two days, or we would be in a hopeless muddle; the correspondence also is very large. Still, when I go to London and hear tales of the unpleasant work women and girls have to do for small pay, I see the advantages *we* have, living at home and being our own mistresses, and free to leave home when we wish. I have tried to persuade girls to do what we do for pocket money, but, as a rule, they lack the physical strength, neither will they give up their fun, and gardening takes all one's time. It is splendid when one *does* get to London for a few months, the change is so complete, and it is like new life getting all the books one wants."

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