

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK.

THE annual general meeting of the Society for Promoting the Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians took place on the 27th ult. at the Westminster Palace Hotel, Mr. J. G. Talbot, M.P., in the chair. In their report the committee expressed the satisfaction they felt at the considerable increase that had taken place in the number of women guardians. The Strand had returned three, Clapham and Battersea three, Hammersmith one, Hampstead one, and Greenwich two. Successes had been attained in other unions, and altogether there were twenty-eight women guardians in London. There were in all forty-three women guardians in the country and five in Scotland, and seventy-six throughout the United Kingdom. It was very desirable that influential local committees should be formed.

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MISS COBDEN recently addressed a crowded meeting of the electors of Bow and Bromley, and explained her reason for not complying with the request of the Vestry to resign her seat. She received a grand ovation, and said that the electors had returned her to the County Council, and she would attend to her duties as far as she was able to do so without incurring penalties. One of the highest legal authorities had told her that she could not resign, she could not be removed, and that she was not qualified to sit. But she intended to stand her ground, and not to be dictated to by a minority, who desired the interests of their party being attended to rather than the welfare of the community.

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At the recent annual meeting of the Women's Trades Union Provident League in Essex Hall, Miss Orme said that she was not one of those who insisted that women who did in every respect the same work as men should receive the same wages for it. She asserted, however, that even allowing for this reduction, women were at the present time receiving very much less than was in fairness their due. This inequality could only be redressed by combination. Combination also would tend to discourage vexatious and often unjustifiable demands made by individual *employés*. No demand ought to be made by any worker which could not command the support of the wisdom of the whole organisation.

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CONCERNING the Brabazon Scheme in Workhouses and Infirmaries, Miss Louisa Twining writes to the *Queen* as follows:—"I am anxious to say a few words to the promoters of this plan with reference to your description of the sale at Paddington

Workhouse. I need hardly say I cordially sympathise with the efforts now being made to utilise the many idle hours and hands in these vast institutions by providing employment, having done so myself, as far as I could, many, many years before the larger plan was thought of, but I am now anxious to press the need of care and watchfulness as to those to whom the work is given. As a guardian, I well know how important this is if the plan is to find favour with the authorities, and any laxity on this point may wreck the whole of the excellent scheme. As one of the administrators of the rates, I find I am becoming increasingly careful as to their expenditure, for we are bound to remember that they are in great measure derived from the hardly won earnings of the prudent and thrifty, often themselves poor, and who have to maintain those who have probably not exercised these qualities as they might and ought to have done. Now, we must not forget that there is in every workhouse an immense amount of needlework of all kinds to be done, the making of all new garments, and the mending of old ones. In many cases paid labour has to be employed, as in my own parish; and thus, when I read of "silk frocks" and embroidered ones being made by inmates, I cannot help asking if these hands were incapable of doing work for the Institution in the way of mending or knitting, or other easy and light work? With the men the case is different, and it is hardly likely that sick and invalid men and boys can do the work that is required, and any occupation for them is, I know, an unmitigated blessing. I hope I shall not be misunderstood. I have spoken of the plan wherever I have an opportunity, and it is just because I cordially admire it that I am so anxious to defend it from possible abuse and certain objections. May I also point out another thought in connection with this subject that has struck me in reading the report of the skill and capacity found in many of these poor wrecked and stranded lives? Surely, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that improvidence, of which the love of drink is certainly the main element, has been one of the chief causes of these many sad failures; and should we not therefore earnestly strive after the prevention of all these evils, which lead to the downward path and its inevitable end?"

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AS OTHERS SEE US.—A special illustrated summer number of *The Nursing Record*, which takes the place of the ordinary issue for June 27, contains, besides articles of professional interest, two entitled "Visitors in the Sick Room," by S. C. Long, and "Hospital Memories: My Baby," which will be of interest to general readers.—*The Literary World*.

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