

Annotations.

THE NEW METAL.

Professor Pierre Curie, who recently lectured to a brilliant audience at the Royal Institution on the properties of radium, the wonderful new metal, shares with Madame Curie, his wife, the honour of its discovery. The Professor, indeed, attributed to Mme. Curie the greater part of the credit for the discoveries they have made. Mme. Curie's brilliant work in scientific research is well known, and this public recognition of it marks a new epoch in the history of women's work, for so far women have not distinguished themselves greatly in the field of original research, most of the great discoveries having been made by men. Professor Curie showed the brilliant green light emanating from radium, penetrating through a plate of lead, and also how certain substances placed in contact with radium become in time impregnated with its properties and produce the same effects as radium itself.

The heating power of the metal was strikingly demonstrated by the Professor, who, in half a minute, brought a quantity of liquid air to the boiling-point by placing it over a tube of radium.

Amongst other properties of radium, is a fatal influence on bacteria, which was demonstrated by Mr. Henry Crookes at the Annual Conversazione of the Royal Society.

SOCIAL LEGISLATION.

The seemly housing of the working classes is a matter of such supreme importance that in our view all other legislation should give way to the consideration of this question. If succeeding generations are to grow up not only healthy, but modest and pure, they must be brought up under conditions in which these virtues can thrive. The one-room tenement is an abomination which should be swept off the face of the earth. How many children who grow up in this environment keep the virtues which before all things are necessary to a nation's welfare? For a family of both sexes to eat, live, and sleep in the same room means that in none of the relations of life can desirable privacy be maintained. Children grow up in surroundings which engender crime, and in later life have to bear the penalty of sins of which the blame rightfully belongs chiefly to those who had no consideration or regard for childish innocence.

At the recent session of the Rochester

Diocesan Conference an elaborate report of the Committee on the Housing of the Poor was presented.

Eventually recommendations were adopted to the effect that this Conference, in view of the serious consequences resulting from overcrowding: 1. Urges Churchmen to support in the coming elections for Borough Councils and the London County Council those only who are determined to use the powers given to them by Act of Parliament for the express purpose of improving the housing conditions of the poor. 2. Is of opinion that it is desirable by Act of Parliament (a) to extend the terms for repayment of loans to sixty or even eighty years, and to allow the land to be reckoned as a permanent asset; (b) to extend the regulations of the Public Health Act to block dwellings, and to enforce registration of ownership of all house property. 3. Is of opinion, further, that it is desirable to secure powers (a) to tax the increase in the value of land and to rate vacant land at its selling value; (b) to establish an organised effort to improve the transit facilities; (c) to give powers to the London County Council to acquire land and to make by-laws for the orderly development of new districts as in Frankfort and Cologne."

NURSES FOR INDIA.

The increased appreciation of the value of the services of trained nurses amongst English people resident abroad is evidenced in a scheme recently propounded to bring their services within reach of the public in India. The need of well-qualified private nurses, especially in the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, is very urgent, as, with the exception of the eleven nurses connected with the Up-country Nursing Association, there are few nurses available for members of the Civil Service and the general public. It is proposed to work the scheme on the co-operative principle, but it is estimated that a sum of £5,000 will be required to meet initial expenses, such as passage-money and nursing outfits, the furnishing of a home in India, and the establishment of a reserve fund to meet emergencies. Subscriptions to the Nurses' Co-operation in India Fund will be received by the Manager of the National Provincial Bank of England (Marylebone Branch), 53, Baker Street, W. Amongst those supporting the movement are the Marchioness of Lansdowne, the Marchioness of Ripon, and the Countess of Elgin.

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