

Annotations.

DUXHURST.

Only those who have taken as their special work in life the combatting of the giant evil of intemperance know how widespread and deep are its roots, how like some great octopus its tentacles make their way into the homes of rich and poor alike, and how wherever the drink craving takes root there sorrow, desolation, and frequently crime follow in its wake. What can be done for those who are unable to resist the temptation to intemperance? Formerly the only recognition taken by the law was of cases which were punishable by imprisonment. Within the last decade the drink habit has been recognised as a disease rather than a crime, and magistrates are now able to send habitual inebriates to reformatories instead of to jail. But there are many cases which do not bring themselves within the pale of the law which are in urgent need of relief. It is, indeed, as obtuse to say to the victim of inebriety, "You must be convicted of drunkenness three times in one year before we can do anything for you," as to say, as the law practically does, to the artisan hitherto self-supporting, who is struggling with a spell of bad luck, and to whom a little timely assistance would mean power to weather the storm, "You must prove destitution before we can give you any relief," and it is just those cases of inebriety, which the law of the land is powerless to help, to which Duxhurst, the Industrial Farm Colony at Reigate, in connection with the National British Women's Temperance Association, proves a haven of refuge.

The charm of Duxhurst, and the success of its work, lies in the fact of its organisation by a woman, whose knowledge of the question to be dealt with, and whose sympathetic insight into, and method of dealing with, individual cases is unrivalled, namely, Lady Henry Somerset. For it takes a woman, and, moreover, a woman of ability, possessed by a large-hearted love of humanity, to deal with the class of cases which find shelter within its gates. The stern arm of the law may deal effectively with a certain type of man; punishment dealt out from the magistrates' bench has usually the effect of making a woman hard and desperate. It is not to punitive measures which she responds, but to the redemptive work which is at the root of the unique organisation of Duxhurst. That the cases received enter the Home voluntarily makes

its work the more hopeful, and they come immediately into contact with the humanising influences which the wit of a good, large-hearted woman knows well how to devise. Prison rules and methods are conspicuous by their absence, but an appeal is made from the first to the spiritual nature, latent even in the most degraded; the rule of love dominates the Colony and its workers, and common-sense pervades the methods employed for the regeneration of the patients. Horticulture, poultry farming, bee-keeping, and basket-making are amongst the employments of proved utility, as well as church and other embroidery. The work is one which is worthy of all support, and must commend itself to all. For the last ten years Lady Henry Somerset has made herself financially responsible for the support of the Colony, but a committee, with Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff as chairman and treasurer, has been formed to relieve her of this responsibility, which it is unfitting she should be called upon to bear in the case of work which meets a national need. Contributions from those desirous of supporting this good work may be sent to the Treasurer, at the offices, 411, Birkbeck Bank Chambers, W.C.

PHYSICAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

The report of the Select Committee appointed to examine the "model course" for drill in elementary schools, appointed in consequence of complaints as to its unsuitability, has recently been laid on the table of the House of Commons. The Committee appears to have found the complaint justified, as the course does not seem to be constructed on well-defined general principles deduced from a consideration of the function of physical exercises as a necessary element in a well-ordered course of general education for children.

The Committee, who recognise the principle that certain children ought to be excluded from participation in manual exercises, are of opinion that mere exclusion is not sufficient. Cases of insufficient feeding or constitutional weakness should be reported without delay to the local authority, so that a remedy can be applied if possible. Further, it is considered of great importance that teachers should not only voluntarily qualify themselves for conducting the course of physical exercises, but should also be afforded an insight into those wider sections of health and physical condition which have such an intimate relation with every aspect of a teacher's work.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)