

of things! As a nurse, I reflect on the debt these men owe to women, and as they pass I see them in imagination helpless babes, never left outside the mother's arm or care: I picture those faithful women washing the little limbs, feeding, warming, drying, rocking them. I see them later as little boys, running with every trouble to mother—now here they are, great, strapping, powerful animals, reeking with egotism, steeped in selfishness. By their looks to other and younger women I see that their debt is forgotten and that they regard women as convenient tools for their own base and unmanly purposes. Strange state of things! Whose is the fault?

Here passes one who seems excited to uncontrollable fury by my shrill pipe of "*Votes for Women*." He turns purple, his face distorted, words fail, he can only emit a harsh, snarling growl, as if he were some kind of wild beast, he would fain rend me, but passes on. "You'll never get it!" calls back a smug person, pleased with himself and all the world. "We'll get it this winter!" I reply. "My good woman, why don't you sell 'The Common Cause'?" inquires a patronising, mild-eyed gentleman. "Because I sell *Votes for Women*" is the reply, that leaves him still inquiring. And then once more a purple tyrant. "If I saw my wife reading that rag," he shouts "I would cut her throat." "I hope she cuts yours first" I cry after him.

But not all are hostile. Ever and anon there lope past some pleasant-faced, clean, set-up youth—almost always a young lad, who buys a paper, or says in passing, with a smile: "I belong to the M.P.U." Sometimes, an older man stops and speaks sympathetically of the cause; one or two have been in prison for it. And even some of the enemy are quite friendly. "Here, give me a paper; I'm dead against you all, dead against you, but I like your pluck, you know; I like your pluck." So spake one genial John Bull and paid his penny.

And what about the women? Well, nine-tenths of all the papers I sell, are bought by women.

L. L. Dock.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN WORKERS.

As already announced, the Annual Conference of the National Union of Women Workers will meet at Oxford from September 30th to October 4th, when questions of wide general interest, such as the Work of Women Inspectors, Women Workers and the Living Wage, Equipment for Personal Service, will be ably presented and discussed. The National Council Meetings take place on October 2nd and 3rd, and various Nursing Associations affiliated to the Council will be represented. Miss B. Cutler, Hon. Secretary, will represent the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick the Society for the State Registration of Nurses.

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

THINGS SANITARY—AND THAT KISS FOR THE BRIDE.

By FELIX J. KOCH.

Just the other night we attended a wedding. Not a wedding among the ultra-rich, where you might look for idiosyncracies, where such things as the bride's favourite lap-dog might be occupying a seat at the bridal table, or perhaps the same board of honour be decked in garish yellow, simply to have things different from what one might expect. Nor, again, was the wedding one among the poor, the lowly, the ignorant.

It was a typical Anglo-Saxon home wedding, one with a hundred odd guests or so, selected from among the friends of bride and groom, bride's parents, groom's parents, and in one case at least, a very good friend of the bride's sister, so good a friend that we are already saving to buy the next wedding present.

We go into details as to these guests a purpose, because they are most relevant to the point we would make.

There was dear old Mrs. Black—let us call her—a charming, motherly soul, but, as she wheezed under the exertion of climbing the stairs to remove her wraps, we detected asthma. There was once jolly "Bob" Brown, to use his nickname—"Bob," who, in our school days, was liveliest of us all. But Bob had overdone his studies; he was tubercular, and he knew it. So Bob, with just a short term lease on life, had lost his buoyant spirits, and is wasting away, to the pity of all. Then, as foil to him—for weddings bring together strange groupings—there was young Mrs. Green.

"Oh, Bess!", she exclaimed, on greeting the bride's sister, "I hardly dared to come. I have such an awful cold, and my eyes do look awful! Now don't tell me they don't, for I know they do. In fact," and she turned to a friend near by, "I'm considerably worried. There is so much pneumonia about."

It was just a vignette, that—out of the doings of the crowd of a hundred. You catch the idea? Our friends may be most delightful people—socially—but (and the subject is a rather indelicate one) we really wouldn't want to kiss them, one after another, in military array, now would we?

On, though, with the wedding. Lohengrin, the minister, the exchange of rings, the solemn vows, the stepping to one side, and then—that relic of barbaric times—the kiss for the bride. Old men, young men, matrons, maids, each stepped past the bride to congratulate and to plant a kiss squarely on her mouth.

"Oh, I don't like those people who kiss on the cheek," someone remarked near us. "It's so cold, so without heart. A kiss is a kiss, and is to be lip to lip." And then we heard another smack of the lips, and another, and another, and another person still kissed our poor bride squarely on the mouth.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)