

headed the list with £11 8s. 9½d., the total amount collected being £77 3s. 1½d., or £14 13s. more than last year. It is agreeably encouraging to note that Nurses are equally "at home" collecting for as in Nursing the sick. S. G.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK.

POST OFFICE CLERKS.

MANY hundreds of female clerks are employed at present by the Civil Service in the General Post Office, both as sorters and clerks in the Receiver and Accountant General's Office and the Savings Bank Department. Appointments for either position are obtainable by competitive examinations, which, however, differ slightly. For the former the five subjects—failure in one or any of which means ineligibility for candidatedship—are as follows :—

- (1) Reading and copying MS.
- (2) Handwriting.
- (3) Spelling.
- (4) Arithmetic (first four rules, simple and compound).
- (5) Geography of the United Kingdom.

For the latter the examination is in the following subjects :—

- (1) Handwriting and spelling.
- (2) Arithmetic.
- (3) English composition, with special grammatical accuracy.
- (4) Geography.
- (5) English History.

I CAN quite appreciate the wherefore of the first subject, reading and copying MSS., but how composition and English history are needed for the working of the internal machinery of our great P.O. my dense brain fails utterly to discover. The number of the candidates accepted at each examination, which are usually bi-annual, depends entirely on the vacancies likely to occur during the next six months. A fee of five shillings for sortership, and two shillings and sixpence for clerkship examinations is demanded. The principal duty of sorters is to sort and arrange official papers. The hours are daily from eight a.m. to five p.m., and the wage is from twelve shillings a week, with one shilling increments to twenty shillings. No Sunday work is required. They must not be less than fifteen, nor more than eighteen, on the day of the examination, whilst the other female clerks must not be less than eighteen or more than twenty. Rules and regulations are manifold. Here is an amusing one, "No candidate will be eligible for appointment who fails to satisfy the

authorities of the Post Office that she is not less than 4ft. 10in. *without boots.*" Evidently the Government does not believe in high heels. Applicants are obliged to state the fact that they are "duly qualified in respect of health and character, and are unmarried or widows." Evidently the Government is determined not to encourage matrimony amongst their employes, at least the feminine ones, for every Post Office clerk (female) is, like the telegraphist, obliged to resign her appointment on marriage; she is not even allowed, as in Russia, to marry by permission, on the intended husband being approved of by that stern censor, Government. Any further information on the subject of C. S. examinations and appointments can be obtained by purchasing the *London Gazette*. The usual salaries of the clerks are from twenty-five to thirty shillings a week. I suppose their wage is higher because they have passed in English history and composition. Superintendents receive from £180 to £300 a year; assistant superintendents from about £80 to £180 per annum.

WHILST on the subject I venture to quote from the *Woman's Penny Paper* the following statistics as to the comparative rate of payment between male and female clerks, though the latter, all admit, work as long and as well as the former :—

CLINICAL STAFF.	
<i>Men Clerks.</i>	<i>Women Clerks.</i>
Sec. Division Lower Grade. Salaries, £70 to £250.	Second Class. Salaries, £85 to £110.
SUPERIOR CLINICAL STAFF.	
<i>Men Clerks.</i>	<i>Women Clerks.</i>
Sec. Division Higher Grade. Salaries, £250 to £350.	First Class. Salaries, £85 to £110.
SUPERINTENDING STAFF.	
<i>Men Clerks.</i>	<i>Women Clerks.</i>
Salaries, £310 to £600.	Salaries, £120 to £200.
HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.	
<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>
Salaries, £625 to £900.	Salaries, £215 to £400.

Evidently the Government leads the van in believing—strange superstition—that they honour woman by under-paying her; or is it, perchance, because of that equally old-fashioned idea that she needs less food and less money than the sterner sex?

ANOTHER distinguished lady student—it is one a week nowadays—has been placed not first this time, but second, on the list of successful candidates for the M.A. degree in philosophy of the London University. Her name is Miss Alice Foxall, and she was educated first at that school of high renown, the North London Collegiate School, conducted by that able mistress, Miss

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)