

either of the islands, and from this bare and barren mound the natives of Inishmain reap a scanty crop for their harvest and winter store. 'Tis only a persevering spirit that could at all expect any return from such flags and stones and rocks.

Kelp making is another industry at the present time almost valueless, because of the low price and the laborious task entailed in its manufacture. The weed from which it is made is first cut, carried in dripping baskets on the backs of both sexes up sometimes great heights of cliffs, spread dry, and then stacked. All this takes months, many hours a day. The weed is then burned, and this operation necessitates constant supervision. I have reason to remark that many chest and kidney diseases occurring in the island are due to the cause of being obliged to live for many hours exposed to intense heat. The large quantity of perspiration poured forth in the exercise of keeping the fire going predisposes them afterwards to chills, when they must return to the cold atmosphere of the homes.

Seeing then the risks and difficulty that must be met by the people in their endeavour to work this, it is a pity that the sale of kelp has not received more attention and consideration from some Board such as the C.D.B. At present the purchase depends on the caprice of some private buyer who rejects or passes what appeals to himself as productive of greatest profit. I have known many of them after a whole year of fruitless labour reduced to the necessity of accepting half price, which is about £2 per ton, because there is no competition in the Aran market.

Another obstacle to progress is the question of the rate war. The sum, small as it was, paid by the islanders in years gone by brought them no return, neither road nor quay. There is no pier worthy of the name at Inishmain. When it becomes necessary for them to trade with the mainland the worst feature of life here presents itself. For instance, a pig going to the Galway market must first be leg-cuffed, dragged on to the curragh, and deposited between the seats occupied by the rowers in a dazed and half wounded condition, and in this manner hauled on to the steamer. During all this handling the market value of the animals offered for sale must of necessity deteriorate.

Despite the above singularly adverse circumstances in which the native of Inishmain finds himself, and the many privations attending his life from the cradle to the grave, many can boast of having passed the allotted span. There is no dispute about the fact that most of the people are improperly nourished, but one thing is certain that what they eat is deprived of those culinary mixtures that bring disease to the rich and better fed, and that the diet they are obliged to consume is better calculated to promote health. Fish, fresh in the spring and dried at other times, is their chief proteid. This is one of the reasons why they are so capable of doing work that to an outsider would be considered insurmountable.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

No one should miss the opportunity afforded by Woman's Kingdom at Olympia, in connection with the Children's Welfare Exhibition, of obtaining an insight into the many activities, social, professional, philanthropic and industrial, in which women are engaged.

Organized by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, suffrage, of course, is a prominent feature. All the decorations, and most of the facia over the stands have been carried out by the Suffrage Atelier. One sees at the stand of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance a facsimile of the historic petition for woman's suffrage presented to Lord Beaconsfield when Prime Minister, bearing such honoured names as Florence Nightingale, Mary Carpenter and Josephine Butler.

An interesting exhibit is that of Women in the Professions, showing those open and those closed to women in various countries of the world. In the United States of America woman has all the mile-stones, including the Church, behind her. Norway has passed all except the Church. Other countries, including the United Kingdom, lag behind. In this connection are many illustrations of "what women want" among which is to be seen the picture of a trained nurse, and, underneath, the inscription, "Nurses want State Registration to promote efficiency"; we learnt that "all the nurses who come along are most enthusiastic about it. Yes, that is just what we do want, they say."

In connection with the section "Women's Work in time of War," many visitors stop to look at the Swiss Red Cross Train, sent by Miss Eden, Taunton, a beautiful model showing night sleepers, adapted for a hospital, as well as a goods wagon improvised to take eight patients.

Striking exhibits at the stand of the National British Women's Temperance Association are two sets of 100 black and white baby dolls, in which the black indicates the infant mortality; amongst sober mothers 23 per cent., amongst drinking mothers, 55 per cent. A series of cress seeds, sent by Lady Horsley, also arrest attention; the first, watered with water, have come up strong and healthy, those watered with tea and coffee only moderately so. Treated with water containing one per cent. alcohol they are so stunted as to be almost invisible, and with a stronger solution have failed to make their appearance.

The Leadless Glaze China Company have a dainty show of china. They are doing good work and should be widely supported.

A series of lectures are being given on many interesting subjects, particulars of which are to be found in the programme.

Of the Children's Welfare Exhibition, opened by Queen Amélie, we can only say it is veritable Fairyland, and the Children's Revue a thing not to be missed.

The bit of the Cornish Riviera was a happy thought, and many children daily enjoy donkey rides on real sand brought up from Cornwall.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)