

lending library for six months. It was decided to have fortnightly lectures on various subjects beginning in the New Year—the lectures to be alternately in the afternoon and evening. It was also decided to have a debating society, and as the club membership increases, it is hoped to have other societies for the recreation and enjoyment of the members.

WOMEN AND WAR.

We warmly sympathise with "Invicta" who writes as follows to the *Observer*:—"I have just received a letter from one of my sons who, together with other young men, have thrown up good jobs in answer to the call to 'Fall in,' and are now quartered at Burgess Hill, in Sussex. In this letter he says: 'The girls here wear badges, having pledged themselves not to speak to a soldier.' Whilst I fully agree that it behoves girls at all times to be circumspect and discreet in forming acquaintances, I consider it an abominable aspersion on the King's uniform, and an act of disloyalty on the part of any person, thus to extort from girls an oath to boycott the lads who have the courage to brave the risks, the hardships and privations of a soldier's lot in this terrible war."

And we as strongly dissent from the resolution passed by the Central Council of the Mothers' Union:—"That the Central Council of the Mothers' Union desires to call attention to the grave danger to the community arising from the grant of pensions to the unmarried dependents of sailors and soldiers; it urges most earnestly upon the Select Committee the importance of establishing the principle that pensions should only be granted to widows and dependent relatives of sailors and soldiers." If such an un-Christian principle is adopted by the Select Committee, then the War Office is in duty bound to refuse the gallant services of any father of illegitimate children, so that they and their mother may not be left to starve.

The North has always been noted for the sturdy independence of its sons and daughters, and it was not to be expected that soldiers' wives should take lying down the imputations on their honour made by the Home Office.

It seems deeply ingrained in the minds of men that women are not to be trusted with money, and that those who have it are liable to go wrong. Whereas the fact is that no one knows its value better, and most women can make a shilling go twice as far as a man.

The soldiers' wives at Preston bitterly resent not only that particulars in regard to them and their families should have been sent, under instructions, by Army paymasters, to the chief constables of the districts in which they reside, which have been indexed for the benefit of the police authorities; but that, following on this, the Home Office has issued a memorandum to the police, asking them to take "discreet and tactful" action to assist women who are receiving larger

sums than they previously enjoyed, and have not now the company and guidance of their husbands, from being led momentarily to careless spending of money and excessive drinking.

Following on this, the Mayor of Preston made the sweeping statement that:—

"Another question was that of the misconduct of the women left behind. One did not like to have to admit it, still it was a fact that these women, left without the protection of their husbands and with more means than they sometimes had, were now indulging in evil practices."

This and other statements so outraged the women, amongst them a Mrs. Hunter, that next time the soldiers' wives met at the General Post Office to draw their allowances she harangued them with such effect that they determined to fight the matter out. The result was a complete vindication of the soldiers' wives of Preston. Not one case in which one of them had taken to drink could be substantiated.

Then the Soldiers' Wives' Committee carried the war into the enemies' camp, memorialized the Relief Committee, requested that a deputation might wait upon it to reply to the charges in the presence of the members, and on being received proved that no atom of evidence had been proved against soldiers' wives as a class.

WHAT CAN A LITTLE CHAP DO?

*What can a little chap do
For his country and for you?
What CAN a little chap do?*

He can fight like a Knight
For the Truth and the Right—
That's one good thing he can do.

He can shun all that's mean,
He can keep himself clean
Both without and within—
That's another good thing he can do.

His soul he can brace
Against everything base,
And the trace will be seen
All his life in his face—
That's a very fine thing he can do.

Though his years be but few,
He can march in the queue
Of the Good and the Great,
Who battled with fate
And won through—
That's a wonderful thing he can do.

By JOHN OXENHAM,
In Princess Mary's Gift Book.

COMING EVENTS.

December 15th.—Penal Board. Central Midwives Board, Caxton House, S.W. 11.30 a.m.

December 16th.—Examination. Central Midwives Board in London, Birmingham, and Bristol. The Oral Examination follows a few days later.

December 17th.—Monthly Meeting. Central Midwives Board, Caxton House, S.W. 3.30 p.m.

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