

earning far less than that. "What most people do not realize is that 30s. a week is itself a wage utterly inadequate for rearing a large, or even a small family. It is inadequate because the whole burden is placed upon the woman who has to bring up a family on 30s. and this burden is excessive.

"The second cause, the lack of knowledge on the part of the women, receives remarkable testimony in these letters. Again and again the writers come back to this subject. They are convinced of the evils that resulted to themselves and their children from their own ignorance of the functions and duties of motherhood. And there can be no doubt that they are right. . . .

of our civilization: the beginning and the end of the working woman's life and duty is still regarded by many as the care of the household, the satisfaction of man's desires, and the bearing of children."

In regard to the offspring: "It has become more and more clear that if you wish to guard the health of the infant you must go back from it to the mother; it is the circumstances of the mother—her health, her knowledge, her education, and her habits—before the child is born no less than at the time of and after birth, that again and again determine whether the child is to have health or disease, to live or to die." From whatever point you regard the question the words of the



ELEVEN CHILDREN BORN, ALL LIVING. FATHER A FISH-HAWKER.
(This family is not connected with the Women's Co-operative Guild.)

"The personal relation of husband and wife is a subject as difficult as it is delicate. Reading these letters one is often struck by the fact that those relations remain so good under the most adverse circumstances. But despite the extraordinary loyalty of the writers there is clearly a consciousness among them that the position of a woman not only impairs the value of that relationship, but is directly responsible for some of the evils we are considering. In plain language—both in law, and in popular morality—the wife is still the inferior in the family to the husband. She is first without economic independence, and the law therefore gives the man, whether he be good or bad, a terrible power over her. Partly for this reason, and partly because all sorts of old half-civilised beliefs still cling to the flimsy skirts

writer of letter 63 are true: We shall not get "a race in the future worthy of England until the nation wakes up to the needs of the mothers of that future race."

We have only space for brief extracts from the vivid and arresting letters of the women themselves. They should be read in their entirety.

"No one but a mother knows the struggle and hardships we working women have to go through. I do hope I shall never have to see the young women of to-day have to go through what I did."

"No one but mothers who have gone through the ordeal of pregnancy half starved, to finally bring a child into the world, to live a living death

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