

SCOTTISH MATRONS' ASSOCIATION.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

The annual meeting of the above Association was held at 70, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on Saturday, February 23rd, Miss Gill, R.R.C., President, in the chair.

Forty members, representative of a large area of Scotland, were present.

Apologies were intimated, and the minutes of last meeting were read and signed.

The President welcomed the members, and dealt with correspondence received since last meeting.

The Secretary read the report for 1917-18, which was adopted.

The Hon. Treasurer's report showed a balance in favour of the Association.

The President, three Vice-Presidents and one member of Council were re-elected.

Two vacancies having occurred in the vice-presidentship during the year, these places were filled by Miss Merchant, Duke Street Hospital, Glasgow, and Miss Philp, Northern Infirmary, Inverness. Miss Peterkin, member of Council, had resigned on her appointment to London as General Superintendent of Q.V.J.N.I., and Miss Rumsey, her successor was appointed in her place. Two members of Council retiring in rotation, the vacancies were filled by Miss Turnbull, Deaconess Hospital, Edinburgh, and Miss McElvey, Arbroath Infirmary.

Two resignations were received, and accepted with regret, and seven new members were elected. The membership now is 128.

Miss Gordon, late Matron, Royal Infirmary, Dumfries, was elected an honorary member.

After the business was concluded, Miss Craig Robertson, Parish Councillor, Glasgow, addressed the meeting on the subject of "Our responsibilities in the use of the women's Parliamentary vote." This proved most interesting and educative. The speaker said that women had not hitherto acted on the responsibilities they had in regard to the local vote. She pointed out that the conscientious use of this affords a very good lesson as to how to use the wider vote. Advisory help is much needed and will be forthcoming. Women will hold more positions on advisory boards. It is the duty and privilege of all women who have studied the question of the responsibilities of the vote to teach others in an unbiassed way.

The speaker urged women to use their criticism kindly, and to see to it that their influence would help to build up their country and not to divide it.

After the address members asked questions, which were answered by Miss Craig Robertson.

The Chairman asked the meeting to accord a vote of thanks to Miss Craig Robertson, which was heartily responded to.

Miss Merchant (Glasgow) moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman, after which tea was served.

Miss Sidney Browne, R.R.C., and the Hon. Sir William H. Goschen, K.B.E., have been appointed co-honorary treasurers with Mr. Comyns Berkeley, M.C., Cantab., of the College of Nursing, Ltd.

"CALVARY ALLEY."*

Anyone who has even a bowing acquaintance with Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch will need no introduction or recommendation to read "Calvary Alley," the latest work of the inimitable Mrs. Wiggs' creator.

This chronicle of an American city slum rivals "Mrs. Wiggs" in its humour and intensely sympathetic insight into the lives of the dwellers in sordid dwellings. Though Mrs. Snawdor is as ineffectual as Mrs. Wiggs was resourceful, yet the same sense of humour marks her goings out and coming in. Snawdor was her third husband. His two predecessors had been respectively, Bud Molloy, who, a widower, had married her out of gratitude for the care of his motherless child, Nance, around whose vivid personality the story is woven and, secondly, the undertaker who had officiated at Molloy's funeral. Yager, after six months of married life, passed away, leaving her a complete embalming outfit and a feeble little Yager.

Her experienced hand next jolted Snawdor out of his rut and bumped him over a hurried courtship into a sudden marriage. He was moved from his small neat room over his shop to the indescribable disorder of "No. One." The subsequent years brought many little Snawdors in their wake. Snawdor did not like being married; he did not enjoy being a father; his one melancholy satisfaction lay in being a martyr.

Mrs. Snawdor, despite her preference for the married state, was never in her home. At night she scrubbed office buildings, by day she slept, and between times she sought diversion in the affairs of her neighbours. The household burdens fell largely on the small shoulders of Nance Molloy.

Our first introduction to Nance was during a raging battle between the cathedral choristers and the slum children who lived at the back. Nance was accused of having wilfully imprinted her small footprint on the new concrete.

"Hers had been a glorious and determining part in the day's battle.

'I did do it,' she declared excitedly. 'That there boy dared me to. Ketch me takin' a 'dare' often an Avenoo kid!'

'What's your name, Sis?' asked the policeman.

'Nance Molloy.'

'Where do you live?'

'Up there at Snawdor's. That's Mis' Snawdor a-yellin' at me.'

'Is she your mother?'

'Nope; she's me step.'

'And yer father?'

'He's me step too. I'm a two-step,' she said with an impudent toss of her head to show her contempt for the servant of the law."

* By Alice Hegan Rice. (Hodder & Stoughton, London.)

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