

## ROSA MANUS

has been Secretary of the National Society for Woman Suffrage, was, during the war, Secretary of the International Congress of Women for Permanent Peace. In 1913, the 100th birthday of the independence of the Netherlands, which was celebrated by several exhibitions, she, together with Dr. Mia Boissevain, founded the Woman's Exhibition, 1813-1913, which proved to be a great propaganda for the Woman's Movement in Holland.

## ANNA POLAK,

in former years President of the local Branch in Groningen of the Woman Suffrage Society, has been since 1908 Directress of the National Bureau for Woman's Labour in the Hague. She consecrates herself wholly to the feminist movement, particularly to all which concerns Women's Labour.

## MRS. C. F. KEHRER-STUART

was for several years President of the local Society for Woman Suffrage in Gorinchem, and at the same time a member of the Board of Officers of the National Society for Woman Suffrage in the Netherlands. In 1912 she moved to the Hague, and was there, in 1913, elected as the President of the Hague Society for Woman Suffrage.

## MRS. CLARA MULDER VAN DE GRAAF DE BRUIJN

is a General Inspector of the Life Insurance Company de Nederlanden, and has been for nine years a very active member of the Board of Officers of the National Society for Woman Suffrage. Belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, she had the courage to join the National Society for Woman Suffrage long before the Roman Catholic Church found it proper to do so.

## MRS. R. VAN WULFFTEN PALTHE-BRÆESE VAN GROENON

is a great feminist. Her greatest help in the Woman Suffrage movement was to organise the street propaganda.

## THE SOCIAL EVIL. AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM.

BY EDITH PICTON-TURBERVILL, O.B.E.

Miss E. Picton-Turbervill's record is as follows, and shows her well qualified to deal with the subject of this article:—Late Head, Overseas and Foreign Department, Y.W.C.A.; spent six years in India in city and student Y.W.C.A. work, and University Mission, Bombay; Member World's (International) Y.W.C.A. Committee; has visited America twice on international work; Chairman Sub-Committee (World's Y.W.C.A.) for International Industrial Commission; Vice-President British Y.W.C.A.; Member Executive Committee, National Council of Women; Chairman Criminal Law Amendment Bill Committee. Etc.

Now that the nations can once again meet and discuss their problems together, one of the most important subjects to be dealt with is the question of venereal disease and prostitution. During the past six years every belligerent nation has been compelled to deal with this problem in one way or another. It is a matter of history that prostitution follows the army, and it is now common knowledge that in some armies as many men were put out of action by the ravages of this disease as by the wounds inflicted by the enemy.

There is no reliable information at present as to how the problem was dealt with in Germany, Austria, Russia, or Belgium. England's main contribution to the difficulty was to pass, under the Defence of the Realm Act, the ill-fated Order in Council called 40 D, by which a woman could be arrested on the suspicion of having venereal disease when consorting with a soldier. It was not only cruel and unjust, but unworkable, and was not long in force. America organised more thoroughly than any other country a scheme to fight the evil of disease. The American Government, to its honour be it said, began its campaign by officially announcing to the army and navy that "continence is compatible with health, and that it is the best prevention of venereal disease."

## America's Campaign.

America, with amazing efficiency, abolished its segregated areas, and circulated the following two sides of the question throughout the United States:—

## THE TWO SIDES.

It is claimed that—

## SEGREGATION

1. Concentrates prostitution, thus facilitating control and reduction.

The truth is that—

## SEGREGATION

1. Increases prostitution, continually advertising vice by making it familiar. Affords a place of commerce, otherwise uncertain and precarious, to the least competent of prostitutes, mentally and physically.

It is claimed that—

## SEGREGATION

2. Decreases prostitution by regulation.

3. Decreases venereal diseases through medical inspection.

4. Enables control of the liquor traffic in connection with prostitution.

5. Prevents crimes against women.

6. Protects the community from offensive and detrimental proximity of prostitution.

7. Decreases graft in connection with prostitution, and the exploitation of the prostitute.

8. Decreases crime by enabling police supervision of a recognised crime centre.

9. Protects boys and young men from contact with the prostitute by removing temptation from the streets and residence districts.

The truth is that—

## SEGREGATION

2. Increases prostitution by increasing the demand, which increases the supply.

3. Increases venereal diseases by deceiving the ignorant into a fancied reliance upon a frequently "faked" and inevitably futile medical inspection.

4. Stimulates an illegal liquor traffic, since commercialised vice fails without liquor.

5. Tends to increase crimes against women by fostering promiscuity and providing a source of sexual brutalisation and degeneracy.

6. Exposes the community by advertising vice as a community necessity, making it easily accessible and tolerated, a condition conducive to the moral degradation of the community.

7. Increases graft by illegal toleration of commercialised vice, tempting the police to exact illegal revenue and confer illegal privilege. Gives free rein to the exploitation of prostitutes.

8. Increases crime by fostering viciousness and disease, providing a meeting place for the idle and vicious, with whom the prostitutes sympathise and usually co-operate.

9. Exposes boys and young men to contact with the prostitute by presenting an ever-present opportunity to "go down the line and see the sights." Provides a show-place for special obscene and depraved exhibitions to which the youth is lured by "runners" and the sale of lewd pictures.

This is no place in which to enter into the American campaign to combat venereal disease in time of war. It was a marvel of organisation and enthusiasm; it claimed to be effective, and as far as the red-light districts and segregated areas, probably was effective. It has, however, to be admitted that some of the methods adopted violated ordinary laws of justice, and the methods of dealing with individual prostitutes some condemnation from the British point of view.

### International Abolitionist Conference to Meet in Geneva in September.

The International Abolitionist Conference is to be held in Geneva this September. It is a significant fact that it will attempt to deal with the question of prostitution in general, and not only, as hitherto, with *regulated* prostitution. This is significant of the fact that the past six years' experience has led students of the subject to realise that regulated vice is decreasing, and clandestine prostitution is a growing danger. Since the last Conference met, women police have come into force in England, and have proved to be of incalculable value. They are the *friends* of girls in distress, consulted in every kind of difficulty, moral or otherwise, in a way that is impossible with the policeman. Women police have come to stay. Since the last Conference many of the countries of Europe have enfranchised their women, others are on the same path. Much remains to be done. France is the citadel of regulation; it still exists in the British Empire: in Malta, Gibraltar, Straits Settlements, and Hong Kong it exists in its worst form, though in India, through the courageous work of Mrs. Dixon the tolerated cantonment brothels are doomed.

## Death-knell of State Regulation.

The death-knell of the regulated system is heard in every land. The death of a system, however, does not lead to new life, nor, indeed, the creation of new laws. The fight is not, after all, so much against disease as against the degradation of mankind, which no medical treatment, be it ever so skilful, can remove.

## A High and Equal Moral Standard the Only Real Remedy.

A high and equal moral standard is not the cry of a dreamer, or a preacher's text. All experience goes to show that it is the *only* cure that will rid the nations of a deadly scourge.