

they must admit that this is generally true. . . Moreover, a girl is not physically fit to marry at eighteen. Then, why not ask that the age limit be raised to twenty-one?

Again, if consent is wanted, her father is the only one a girl has to ask. Now, it is the mother that Nature has decided shall be most closely connected with the child. When she has to give to the child so much sacrifice in motherhood, is it not only fair that the mother shall ask for equal guardianship?

The father has entire control of the child in other matters. For instance, a man from the Old Land married here, and almost immediately afterwards found that he had consumption. He died before his child was born, yet he willed that unborn child to his parents in the Old Country, to be brought up and educated!—That child was the mother's by Divine law, yet in the eyes of our common law he was its only parent. That law still stands.

[A lawyer here states that had the matter been referred to the courts, a different disposition might have been made if for the advantage of the child.—Ed.]

But in reference to the child of the unmarried mother: No man figures there in Ontario; the mother is the only parent. She bears the child in shame, and is forced to keep herself and, legally, the child, until it is 14. In New Brunswick, they have passed a law providing that the father shall pay \$100 at the request of the House of Alms Commission. In Nova Scotia, the father of such a child is responsible for the support of the mother for a certain period, and for that of the child until it is fourteen years of age. Why should Ontario do nothing in this matter? The sin of illegitimacy is everywhere in Ontario. Can't we do something? Can we not ask that the age of consent be raised to 18?

Again, even in Toronto, girls are entrapped into immoral lives in various and unforeseen ways. "You," appealing to the audience, "can safeguard your daughters, by what you tell them, and you can help in broader ways. Ask yourselves, 'What can I do?'"

A heavy penalty is attached to a man who becomes the father of a child borne by a feeble-minded woman, but—a feeble-minded woman's word is not taken in any court. Nothing can be done. A girl of twenty, of whom the speaker knew, is the mother of three feeble-minded children, who are sure to be an expense to the country, and likely to go into a Reformatory. Why not adopt preventive measures?

Our Divorce Laws, too, need inquiry. In Ontario there is no divorce court, and it is necessary to appeal to a higher court,—a proceeding that is very costly. Have you never known one case where divorce might be desirable—perhaps in the case of a poor, struggling woman, who has to work to support her children? Surely divorce should be as easy for the poor, struggling woman, as for the rich.

In Quebec there is no divorce court, but when a man desires divorce there, he has simply to show that his wife has been once or twice unfaithful to him. If the wife wants it, she has to prove that her husband has been habitually so, and, moreover, that he has brought the woman and kept her under his roof. In Quebec, then, a man may be a disgrace to his family and the community, but so long as he keeps the "other woman" in the background it is all right.

In regard to property: The question of the Dower Act came up in this Convention, and it was seen that, if a husband dies without a will, this gives the wife one-third, or one-half if there is no family. Now, many young people have started with a heavy mortgage. It was cleared off, the wife taking her share in the struggle. Now the two wish to retire, and in order to do so the property must be sold. It now becomes necessary for the wife to sign away her right, else the purchaser cannot buy. The Dower Act only pertained to landed property, so that the husband can now do as he likes with the money.—Yet, the woman helped to pay off the mortgage! Surely we can ask that some provision be made

so that no man can have it in his power to will away everything.

Speaking of the School Question: You women have a vote in regard to this, if you have property in your own name, or an income of \$600. Why don't you use it? Any married woman, with qualifications, can run as school trustee. The closeness of school and home has thus been recognized, and it would be a good thing if a woman were on every School Board. One has heard of School Boards made up of, say, an old man whose children have left school, an old bachelor, and a young fellow, and probably the object of this Board has been chiefly to keep down expenses. Now, if there is one place where expense should not be kept down, it is in regard to the schools. (Applause.)

The Women's Institute can also do much to stop the circulation of indecent post cards, etc. If you find anything of the kind, re-direct it to the Postmaster-General at Ottawa, and send him a note with all particulars. The matter is then in his hands, and your name need not be connected with it. Or, if you prefer, refer the matter to the National Council of Women. The vile-printed page sticks in a boy's mind. Safeguard your girl, but safeguard your boy as well. Safeguard them both by asking amendments on various points in the law. One simple way to bring about betterment is to consider, in your Institutes, points on questions of law, then draw up resolutions, get the voice of the meeting, and send the report on to the Corresponding Secretary of the National Council of Women. We of the Institute recognize that we are partly under the support of the Government, and that we must be careful of party matters, but these women of the Council know the wires that need pulling. They can accomplish in these things.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.

Dr. J. W. S. McCullough, of Toronto, took up this question. By the new Medical Health Act, he explained, Ontario has been divided into seven sections, with a medical supervisor for each. These men are waiting to receive complaints re unsanitary conditions, etc.; their knowledge of the subject will be of great value; and they will give their whole time to the work.

Tuberculosis has now been made a reportable disease, like smallpox, measles, etc.

The Women's Institute can do much towards having the regulation carried out, and the Medical Department will be glad of its co-operation. Public health is the most important matter that comes before the purview of legislation, care of public health the first duty of a statesman.

Dr. McCullough's address was illustrated and added to by a series of moving pictures, showing as a vivid lesson, the effects of impure milk; the development of the house fly from egg to full-grown fly, through the larval and pupal stages; the harm wrought by flies, and, lastly, the way in which trained nurses are teaching ignorant mothers how to care for their babies.

LABOR-SAVING DEVICES.

The last item on the programme was a discussion in regard to labor-saving devices, e. g., the vacuum cleaner, dustless mop, electrical appliances, etc., then the Convention was closed by a vote of thanks, moved and seconded by ladies in the gallery, to the ladies and gentlemen who had assisted in making the Convention such an assured success.

[This closes the "official" report, as it were, of the Convention of 1912. Many points have, of necessity, been omitted; but some of these may be brought up later, as we wish to "talk it all over," in following issues, in the "Ingle Nook" Department of this paper. "Junia" will be pleased to hear from any of the delegates who may wish to take a part in the "chat."]

Star-led to the Heights.

A Christmas story, by Dora Farncomb (author of "Hope's Quiet Hour" and "The Vision of His Face"). Price, 35 cents, postpaid, or three copies for a dollar. The William Weld Co., London, Canada.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

Clothed in White.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.—Rev. iii. 5.

The Bible is a book which appeals to men in all ages. We have outgrown many books, and the rewards they offer seem to us as valueless as the toys which mean so much to children, but have no value when youth has passed. But the rewards offered by Christ are still the highest we can desire. Think of this one, for instance; the promise made to the sinful church in Sardis—the church where only a few members had not defiled their garments. These undefiled saints of God were promised that they should walk with their Lord in white, for they had proved themselves worthy; but the same hope was held out to others who had defiled their white robes of innocence. They also might fight against their sins and overcome, they also might be clothed in the fine linen which is the righteousness of saints. No future holiness could possibly blot out one stain of past sin, no tears could wash out the evil they had committed; and yet they might take their rightful place among those who stand before the Throne, clothed in white robes, with palms of victory in their hands. Only One Fountain, able to cleanse from the defilement of sin, has ever been known. Unless we wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, we can never be clothed in stainless purity. The blood represents the life, and the Life of Christ was offered for the sins of the whole world, as His Life abides in us to make us holy.

I said that the reward He offers is still the greatest we can desire; and the desire to "be perfect, even as our Father is perfect," must still captivate us even if every other possible desire should be gratified.

The glory of God is His infinite Holiness.

Daniel saw in a vision "The Ancient of Days, Whose garment was white as snow"; and He Who came from heaven to show us the Father's beauty of holiness was transfigured before His disciples, "and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light."

In the sixth chapter of Revelation we are given a glimpse of those who suffered as martyrs for Christ, and we are told that when they cried unto God for judgment on those who had killed them, "white robes were given unto every one of them." Who would not think the white robe of holiness sufficient reward for all they had endured? No wonder St. Paul exclaims: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

When the time of the marriage of the King's Son has arrived, and His wife hath made herself ready, we are told that she shall be "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Then there will be great joy in heaven and on earth.

Christ loved "His Bride, the Church," and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

The desire for holiness is an instinct with us all, for we are all the children of God, and made in the image of the All-Holy. But we fall into sin, and our white robes are stained and defiled. It is no use trying to wash out the stains ourselves, for only God can do that. No wonder the rulers of Israel were angry with our Lord when He calmly forgave the sins of men who came to Him for healing. Unless they were willing to own Him as God, they could not believe that He had power to forgive sins—a far greater thing than the power to heal sickness.

Last week I read a book in which the writer declared that she would not lay her sins on Christ, but would stand fearlessly before God and bear the punishment of her own sins. She evidently

thought that our great hope, as Christians, was to escape punishment, through the Sacrifice once offered for the sins of the whole world; whereas the far grander hope is held out to us of being cleansed from sin itself. Suppose a man has committed a terrible crime, and he is assured that he will be shielded from the consequences of that crime. No one will know about it, and no punishment will follow. At first he may feel greatly relieved, but the sense of guilt will grow more and more heavy—unless he is hardened in sin—until at last he would gladly accept all the punishment he deserves if that would wash out the sin. But it will not. All the learning of men has never found a cure for the disease of sin. We can never wash out, by our own power, the smallest sin of thought which has once stained our white raiment. If it were not for the good news contained in the Bible, we should all have to give up the glorious hope of being clothed in white.

Some people talk about the sacred books of India, China, or Turkey, as if they stood almost on a level with our Bible—although parts of them are said to be so vile that they could not be printed in English. Which of those books wakes up in men's souls the hunger and thirst after righteousness which springs from earnest study of our Great Book? Which of them holds forth the glorious hope of regaining lost purity, of shining more and more unto the perfect day?

We say so lightly: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins"; but that is because we have always known the wonderful promise of God: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." If we had only known the foulness of our sins, without seeing any possibility of getting the stains of the past washed away, we could not consider it a light matter.

The writer who was so willing to answer before God for her own sins, also seemed very contemptuous about the people who, Sunday after Sunday, confessed themselves to be "miserable sinners," pleading to God for His promised forgiveness. She evidently considered that they were either not forgiven in answer to their prayers, or else that they very weakly fell into the same sins again. But which of us is not weak? We fall in love to God and our neighbor, we do good with a secret desire to be admired for our goodness, instead of seeking only to glorify God, we pray listlessly or carelessly, forgetting that the Almighty King of the universe is listening. Perhaps we drift comfortably on the current of public opinion, considering that we are "successful" if we are gaining money, social position, or worldly influence. Perhaps we prove our sinful lovelessness by repeating, or eagerly listening to, unkind gossip about other members of God's family. Perhaps we even try to get an unfair advantage by trickery, cheating, or lying. Perhaps we are hypocrites, trying to appear better than we are. Perhaps we secretly think or act as if there were no God to see into our hearts.

Sin creeps in and spoils the beauty even of our best offerings of praise and prayer. The more we desire to consecrate ourselves entirely to God's service the more distressed we are at our frequent falls.

And most, when we, Thy flock,
Before Thine altar bend,
And strange, bewildering thoughts,
With those sweet moments blend,
By Him Whose death we plead,
Good Lord, Thy help extend.
Bow down Thine ear and hear!
Open Thine eyes and see!
Our very love is shame,
And we must come to Thee
To make it of Thy grace
What Thou would'st have it be."

Sin is a great fact in all our lives. Shutting our eyes to it does not wash it out. It has been said: "Character is what a man is in the dark." Dare any of us hold up the past year before God, comparing our lives with His awful holiness, and say that our robes of righteousness are spotless and shining? We can only do it if we are wearing the robe of Christ's righteousness, if He has forgiven our sins and given us a fresh