

fancy that everyone would see the true significance of the poem without attention being thus called to it. But be that as it may, our aim and his is to voice the resentment of the service: a resentment felt, not against criticisms made in good faith, but against the unjust and essentially cowardly attacks that are only too often in evidence.

OUR GENTLE SISTERS.

In another column is published a special article contributed by certain ladies, members of the service. These ladies do not undertake to speak for all women in the service, but only for their own group, as we are glad to point out on their behalf. The article is well worth a perusal. Its tone is fair, and there is in it, under a show of truculence, a vein of right good humour.

As to the prime contention, namely, that the sexes are equal in power and glory, who can decide? All that is accidental and fortuitous to the question must first be eliminated. This is a large order, and involves the setting aside, were that possible, of centuries of accumulated inherited tendencies, the fruit of specialized physical and mental habits. For our part, we confess ourselves quite unable to cope with it upon that basis, and in default we fall back upon the law and the prophets. With what result? The usual result. In one camp a host headed by the High Priest of Idealism, Plato himself, who to this day still feeds the thought of the world. He contended for the equality of the sexes. In the other camp is ranged a throng among whom is conspicuous the Great Cham of Literature, Samuel Johnson. Hear him: "It is mind that always governs. When it comes to dry understanding, man has the better." In such a state of affairs, we fall back upon our own private opinion, which shall — shall remain *strictly private*.

A second question, forcefully presented by the ladies themselves, is more practical. It appears to us that they correctly gauge the situation in implying, as they do, that women cannot now be dislodged from business, or remain much longer out of politics. Indirectly, they have always been in politics, but now, if we may trust to all the signs, the distaff is to come out into the open market-place. Professor Pearson, of Cambridge, has held for years that this is to be the dominant movement of the present century, and many others who think they know a hawk from a hen-shaw have watched the growth of the cloud, at first no bigger than a woman's own hand. Idealists who believe that that "which is the most holy will be the most useful," will not be fearful over-much; and others need not worry, the gods having divinely appointed that the pot shall keep a-boiling.

THE PROPOSED CO-OPERATIVE LOAN ASSOCIATION.

There are two reasons for gratification in the meeting held at the call of *THE CIVILIAN* on the 12th inst., to discuss the formation of a Co-operative Loan Association within the service, details concerning which are published in a report on another page. In the first place, the object is a most worthy one, and the meeting gave it an initial impetus of support and enthusiasm which will carry it far. In the second place, as a mere instance of the enkindled interest of the service in its own affairs, a meeting of one hundred and fifty persons, called at short notice, to discuss a subject which, however important, is largely of a technical and little understood nature, proves what excellent material is at hand for the propagation of ideas of self-help and self-confidence.

If there was one feature of the meeting that calls for special comment, it was the clarifying effect of