

# DEBATING SOCIETY.

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23/4

The Ringwood Dramatic Club formed  
President Mr Loughnan, Mr. Greenwood Secy  
Mr B. Stanbury was appointed Comedian  
Mr. Wagner occupied the chair

no year  
stated

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The inaugural meeting of the Ringwood  
Debating Socy was held in the Methodist  
School Room, & was well attended. President  
Mr L. East.

? 1909

## Snipkins and Softleigh at Ringwood.

The case of Snipkins v. Softleigh, in which Amelia Snipkins, of Pretence avenue, Ringwood, sued Augustus Cattarmole Vere de Vere Softleigh, of Softleigh court, gentleman, for alleged breach of promise, and claimed damages to the extent of £14,301, was decided last Monday night before a crowded court, at the meeting of the Ringwood literary and debating society. Mr. H. Burchett, as Miss Snipkins, was the centre and mainstay of the proceedings, and he took his part so naturally and well that doubts arose in more than one mind as to whether the young lady was "made up" or not. She looked sufficiently charming to both call forth rather envious criticisms from some of the young ladies present, and to make the defendant feel sorry that he had been so blind to her charms as to allow the case to come into court. A frock coat (well filled), silk hat, gloves, cane, and eye-glass were all that were necessary for Mr. L. Thomas to successfully impersonate the defendant, whose chief boast was the blue blood that ran in his veins, and the fact that he could trace his ancestors back to the times of the Saxons. Mr. A. P. Greenwood, as Ebenezer Snipkins, made an excellent father, and is to be congratulated upon retaining his youthfulness and vigor in spite of the worries and cares which go with a large family and a small income. Ebenezer Cromwell Abraham Snipkins (Mr. Arthur Aird) produced much merriment by relating some of the things he, the young brother of the plaintiff, saw when defendant used to call on his sister. "Now then, my lad," said plaintiff's counsel, in his most confident tone, "What did you say when Mr. Softleigh asked what you would do when he took your sister away?" "I said I could stand it if he could," was the prompt reply, and counsel sat down suddenly. Mr. S. Falconer, as Constable Timberface, was undoubtedly the "wit" of the case. He carried out his part excellently, and was responsible for many highly appreciated jokes. Mr. Raey Jones (Mr. W. McKinley) gave evidence as a friend of the defendant. Mr. Briefless, K.C. (Mr. East), appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr. Graball, of Messrs. Graball

and Squeezem (Mr. Tonkin) for the defendant. Mr. Thomas occupied the judicial chair, while Mr. F. J. Clarke proved his worth as foreman of the jury. When a verdict of £10,000 damages was announced, the plaintiff immediately swooned into the arms of her father and her counsel. It is rumored that the contending parties have since "made it up" again, as Constable Timberface reports having seen them travelling together on the following morning, and although he could not catch the subject of conversation, he heard enough to satisfy him that they were consoling each other on the lack of time for breakfast. *Reporter 16/7/09.*

The inaugural meeting of the Ringwood debating society was held on Monday in the Methodist schoolroom, and was well attended. The following office-bearers were appointed:—President, Mr L. East; vice-presidents, Messrs A. Hocking and J. B. McAlpin; secretary, Mr H. Falconer; treasurer, Mr Pithie, junr.; committee, Mesdames Greenwood, Hocking, Anderson, and Misses Greenwood and F. Burchett. The business was interspersed with musical items. Miss Leah Freedman excelled herself in the recitation, "After the Ball," and was recalled several times. Miss Ethel Greenwood sang "Down the Burn" very sweetly. Mr Loughnan delighted the members with gramophone selections. The next meeting will take the form of a "Mock Election." *Reporter 30/4/09.*

1909

Mr. Madden congratulated the speakers who had opened the debate. He then laid stress on the fact that the home where the wife knew little about domestic duties was not likely to be a bright and happy one.

Mr. Evans said too many women were employed in the Federal Bank, to the detriment of returned soldiers. No woman who was getting from £4 to £6 a week would think of marrying a man who was only earning £4 10/- a week. He was opposed to women doing men's work.

Mrs. Greenwood said the reason so many women were employed in banks and factories was that they were beating the men, being more trustworthy and reliable. Mrs. Greenwood made good points in her address.

Mr. Greenwood scored a point on his adversary, who accused women of trying to usurp the man's domain, by retorting, "What about the man who sold pins and ribbons over the counter? Was that a man's business?"

Mr. Parker said after so many fine speeches he could not say much, but he did not think it was right that women should take the place of men.

Mr. Swan said girls were given preference because they were paid less than men.

Misses Porteous and Lade and Mrs. Dawes also spoke.

Mr. Mueller read a paper on the "Domestic Problem" by E. T. Miles, which will appear in our next issue. Mr. Miles' paper really grappled with the facts that have to be dealt with in solving this difficult and intricate problem, viz., "Woman's true sphere." In dealing with the subject he called "a spade a spade," and not a rectangular implement.

Ch. 1/2/22

1922

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years' time, and if England were in it, as she was sure to be, she would come out on top in the same way as she had in the late war.

On the whole the evening was really a pleasant one, and enjoyed by all present.

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5/3/15 - <sup>Rivers</sup> ~~Notes~~  
 The Township was visited  
 on Wednesday evening  
 by Miss Adela Parkhurst  
 who was connected  
 with the Suffragette  
 movement in England  
 Miss Parkhurst  
 declined to a meeting  
 of women folk in  
 the Mechanics Institute

1915

**THE DEBATING SOCIETY.**

There was a large attendance at the meeting on Monday night. The subject debated was: "Are home duties the most useful work for women?" The Rev. Mr. Alstin opened the debate, and in his preliminary remarks stated that he would like it to be understood that when he mentioned the home he did not mean to convey the idea that woman's chief object in life was to be confined to "washing pots and pans and scrubbing floors." He drew a picture of home life, in which the woman should reign as queen. She should be the charm and center of all home happiness, which should shed its influence far and wide. She was never intended to dominate over man by usurping his place in the world's activities. It was in the home circle that her power and influence for good should be exerted. It was her special function to make the home bright and happy by making it truly a home where love reigned supreme. Her delight should be found in instilling into the minds of her children high and noble ideals, and in making them feel that they had an object in life, which was to dispel gloom, create in its place the spirit of emulation, and shed a halo of gladness in the circle in which they moved. When women forsook the home and entered the various professions, they lost that grace and dignity which has ever been the distinguishing characteristic of the woman who made her home, with all its attractions, the center of her life. They had numbers of instances which unmistakably proved that the women who went in for professional life were not a success. For instance, the lady barristers had to spend their time in law offices, as men would not brief them. Women doctors were in the same category; even women preferred to employ male doctors; while the women politicians could hardly be classed as a success. There were other realms in which women could shine. They could excel as nurses and teachers, which associations seemed a part of their nature, and was closely associated with the work of the home. In a word, the woman who carried

1922

out her duty in life could do more for the good of society than all the women doctors and lawyers put together. The above is only a condensed epitome of the reverend gentleman's arguments.

Mrs. Les. Steer read a very carefully prepared paper, in which she discussed the question from an academic standpoint, and contended that women being highly gifted and cultured were competent to fulfil the highest positions in life, especially law, physic and literature. They tended to elevate and ennoble any calling on which they centered their whole being, and their refining influence would brighten up and bring joy and happiness into lives that were sad and homes where domestic felicity was unknown. The paper was a very fine literary production, and reflected much credit on its author; but it was too Utopian in tone to cope with the trials and troubles of every-day life.

Mr. Wakeman said he did not think either of the speakers had thrown much light on the subject. They did not tell them why so many girls preferred the factory life to the domestic calling. When a man got married he wanted a wife who could make his home happy, and attend to his wants.

Mr. Clark said it was he who had first suggested the subject of debate. He then went on to prove that the "woman who rocked the cradle ruled the world." All the civic and domestic duties were included in that phrase. Outside the home women could exert a wise and beneficent influence, and it was their especial duty to refine and elevate society.

**RINGWOOD DEBATING SOCIETY.**

The usual weekly meeting of the above was held in the Mechanics' on Monday night. There was a good attendance of members. Mr. S. Gill, president, occupied the chair.

A pleasant innovation was introduced, and its discussion caused much interest, as well as merriment. It was "Impromptu Speaking." The name of the subject was placed in a hat, and when it was drawn the name of the person who had to speak on it was drawn out of another hat, hence the person who had to speak was taken unawares, and had to do the best he could with the difficult task set him.

The following are the principal questions dealt with:—

"Has property increased in value since the railway line was electrified to Ringwood?" This fell to the lot of Mr. Oates, who was only allowed five minutes to speak. He contended that property had risen immensely since the line was electrified, and that it was still going up. The surroundings of Ringwood, in addition to its salubrious and invigorating atmosphere, acted as a magnet, and tended to draw people from the city. All that was wanted was better and faster trains, and this they had now that the line was electrified. Ringwood with its electric line was destined to become the queen suburb of the east, and as it advanced population would increase, and prices for freeholds would soar higher and higher. It would only be a little while before they would have a town hall, and a borough of their own.

16/3/23

"Should Ladies Propose?" This question was nicely and tersely handled by Miss Madden, who contended that as young gentlemen were so bashful, and hid their "light under a bushel," and as young women had to fight for their living the same as men, they should be allowed the same privilege; therefore, if they thought it in order to bring bashful Romeos up to the scratch, young women should have the right to propose. In olden times these things were done "under the rose," now they should take place in the open.

"Should Police Wear Uniforms?" This question fell to the lot of Mr. Evans, who argued that all detectives and police who were on special duty should appear in private clothes; but at public gatherings the wiser course to pursue was to have the police in uniform, where their presence acted as a deterrent, and was an important factor in maintaining order.

"Can Wrong Actions be Justified in Helping a Good Cause?" This question fell to the lot of Mr. A. V. Greenwood, who argued that no good cause could be bolstered up by resorting to ways that were questionable; but when the life of the nation was at stake the best and wisest means should be adopted to gain the end in view.

"Should Military Training be Abolished?" Master Madden dealt with this question, and in doing so said he was of opinion that it should, and only the voluntary system adopted.

"Free Trade." Mr. A. E. Clarke in speaking on this subject said he considered free trade was of great advantage to most countries, especially to Australia. He contended that many things could be made cheaper in England and America than in Australia.

"Have Women a Right to Interfere in the Milk Combine?" Miss Valeria Berger said they had a perfect right to do so, and also to take part in any other domestic question which affected them. In endeavoring to reduce the price of milk, they were engaged in a most laudable undertaking, as they were ministering to the wants of young children as well as the poorer sections of the community.

"Is Marriage a Failure?" The Rev. Wesley Johns dealt with this much vexed question in a manner that showed he was thoroughly conversant with it. He was also very humorous in his remarks, which pleased the audience. His main contention was that in many cases marriage was a blessing, but in others, alas, it was a failure.

"Should Bachelors be Taxed?" Dr. Langley in dealing with this question argued forcibly that bachelors should be taxed up to the hilt. It was not fair that married men should have to bear all responsibility while single men had little or no care, and when strikes occurred bachelors had little to fear. They should be taxed to help to provide the general revenue.

"Is War Justifiable?" Mr. Wakeman said if they wanted to put an end to war then they must stop the growth of militarism. Sometimes war was necessary in order to get rid of the undesirables; in fact, there was war everywhere—if not with dangerous implements, then with the tongue. There had been wars from time immemorial, and they would continue to the end of the chapter. He thought there would be another big war in 20

1923

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**WOMEN PREACH, PRO-  
TESTER PARLIAMENT?**

This was the interesting subject that was debated at the meeting of the Ringwood Debating Society on Monday evening, when it was dealt with by two of the lady members—Misses Lade and Porteous. The following are the essays which they read, and both will well repay perusal. The first is by Miss Lade.

It gives me great pleasure to affirm that women should propose, should preach, and become members of Parliament.

It is my intention to deal first with preaching and Parliament, and proposing, which is of the least importance, can be left till the last.

The opinion is held by the majority of people that the home is woman's natural sphere. In this I quite agree, but if she has the ability and leisure to take an active part in public affairs, there is no reason why she should not do so. But to-night I wish to speak more particularly of the women who have no home ties, and who form quite a large percentage of Australia's population. They must have some outlet for their energies, and, unlike a man, who is content with a hobby, they feel it their duty to be of some definite use in the world, and to make their influence felt. Through what better medium can this be accomplished than that of the Church and Parliament? Women as a whole are not as strong physically as men, but are endowed with equal brain power; therefore, in any walk in life where brain more than physical strength is required, there is no reason why they should not enter into competition with the sterner sex. It is a recognised fact that women are more religious than men. This is shown by the preponderance of women at any place of worship, and by the active part they take in any Christian effort. The learned theologian is not necessarily the most efficient preacher. Women, by their instinctive knowledge of human nature, may be more influential than men, with their hard, cold logic. Moreover, women's preaching is practical and consistent, and these qualities carry more weight than much oratory. In Parliament, with their ability of seeing all round a question, where a man can see only one side, they would be invaluable in the framing of laws, especially those concerning better housing, care of children, and all matters pertaining to domestic life. For instance, to give a homely illustration, would we be paying 2/5 per lb. for butter, when the same Australian butter can be had in England for 1/11 per lb., if women had a say in the matter. The

There must be something radically wrong when we have to pay such prices for things we produce in our own country in such large quantities. These matters concern women vitally. It is clearly shown, by the forming of so many organisations, clubs and societies, that women are fast coming into their own, and will make their influence felt throughout the community at large.

I would like just here to quote from the Italian Prime Minister's speech of welcome to the International Women's Suffrage Alliance held recently at Rome, including 43 nations, including Australia. He said, "So far as I am concerned, I feel authorised to declare that the Fascisti Government, if the unforeseen does not happen, can vouch that it will grant the several classes of women the right to vote, beginning with the municipal elections, and following with the political elections. By proceeding in stages no disastrous effects will ensue, such as are predicted by some pessimists. On the contrary, very probably it will have beneficial consequences, because the women will bring into exercise with the new right their fundamental qualities of foresight, balance and wisdom." The president (Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt) thanked the Government and people of Italy for the welcome. "Our congress," she said, "represents a step forward in the world movement among women which demands the repeal of antiquated so called women's laws and customs, and the substitution of the fact that a woman is a human being. Our congress represents the women of 43 out of 60 nations in the world. We have delegates from 28 nations, whose women are voters on equal terms with men. Among them are members of Parliament, and councillors in great cities. The delegates who are still pleading for the franchise represent 15 nations only. The majority of us are enfranchised, and form part of the collective rulers of the nations. We stand for educated men and women, for schools for all children, for work and good wages, for better homes, and for the more tender and scientific care of children. In Australia all of the women have the vote. Of all continents South America is the only one where no woman votes, yet it is the continent of republics. Our suffrage movement has girdled the earth. We are an army, but our only weapon is an appeal for justice."

Women do not want to get into Parliament, as some might think, because it is a soft job, and a nice little salary, but they will be of some use, and it goes without saying, some ornament, too.

With regard to the question, should women propose, the time seems hardly ripe, although, considering the progress women have made in business and professions, the time will come when

they feel themselves qualified to take the initiative in proposals of marriage. I never heard of one who did propose, and have read of only one. She was a new woman—a very new woman—and by profession an estate agent; after she had proposed and been refused, she didn't feel quite so new. This I would like to say to the credit of the man in the story, he was a sport and didn't tell.

The Negative—By Miss Porteous.

Should Women Propose?—I don't know whether this means should the present order be reversed and women propose instead of men, or should women propose as well as men. If the former, it would complicate matters very much for the men, as a few favored ones—the best looking and the wealthies would receive hundreds of proposals, while the majority would not receive any, and there would be fewer marriages. In any case, it would be a most undignified proceeding. No self-respecting woman, no matter how much she admired a man, could ask him to let her share his worldly goods. There might be chaos in some communities, wild, excited females rushing hither and thither in search of prey, while all the eligible men, seeing the light of conquest in the eye of every single woman of their acquaintance, would carefully avoid her for fear she should "pop the question." The young man of to-day thinks he is bestowing a tremendous favor when he asks a girl to marry him—how insufferably condescending would he be if she proposed to him. One can imagine a young lady saying to the young man of her choice, "Will you be mine?" I wonder if he would blush and say, "Well—er—this is rather sudden," and then ask for a week to think it over, or perhaps refer her to his ma.

Should Women Preach?—Every woman has a perfect right to express her opinion on any matter, but when it comes to occupying the pulpit, or speaking from a public platform, she is out of place to say the least. There are some occupations which are essentially masculine, just as some are essentially feminine. Men and women are constituted so differently, both in physique and temperament, and had God or nature intended woman to do the masculine work of preaching, she would have been provided with the necessary equipment; she would certainly have had a speaking voice which could be heard further than the front seats of a large building. In these days when there is such a craze among women for taking up men's vocations, there are few candidates for manual labor such as farm or orchard work. Woman realizes her physical limitations there, and though, by even a wide stretch of imagination preaching can scarcely termed "manual" labor,

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# DEBATING SOCIETY

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DEBATING SOCIETY.

There was a large attendance at the meeting of the above society held in the Mechanics' on Monday evening. Mr. S. Gill presided.

The subject debated was, "Is it advisable to have a modern hotel with in the vicinity of Ringwood station?" As everyone seems more or less interested in the drink question, and as most people are pretty well informed on this subject, much interest was taken in the debate, especially by the ladies present. The affirmative was taken by Mr. F. Swann, and the negative by Mr. A. Oates.

Mr. Swann said as he had very busy during the week he had little or no time to prepare his address; but he did not think he would experience any difficulty in proving that it would be both advantageous and beneficial to Ringwood to have a modern hotel erected where ample accommodation could, and would, be provided for all sections of the community, which was not the case at present. He contended that all sensible people, who were not prejudiced in their views and saw everything through jaundiced spectacles, would admit the wisdom of such a convenience as a modern hostelry being erected in Ringwood. He instanced the case of Croydon, where some 26 houses had been erected last year than were put up in Ringwood, and that was doubtless owing to the fact that there was in that town a fine, up to date hostelry, where people could get ample accommodation. A good hotel conducted on modern principles added prestige and dignity to any town. He contended that de-licensed houses and restaurants could not provide the comforts and domestic accommodation equal to that of a licensed victualler who was continually attending to the wants of his patrons, and in seeing that the appointments of his hotel were in accordance with the latest inventions and architectural designs. These things could not be provided by the ordinary boarding house. He instanced the case in Sydney where a temperance boarding house was established, and it had all the power of the prohibitionists behind it, yet, notwithstanding all that help the venture turned out an arrant failure, and eventually the building passed into the hands of moderate men. Coming to the practical side of his contention, he did not see why honest, working men, after a hard day's work, should have to walk three-quarters of a mile to get a drink. Beer did not do a man as much harm as the drinking of iced drinks and the inordinate consumption of tea. If

... cold weather, too, men might stimulant to keep out... It did not follow that because an up-to-date and well conducted hotel were erected in Ringwood that it would increase drunkenness or be the resort of tipsters, as the law as now administered compelled the licensee to conduct his business in such a manner that it could not become a menace to society. On the other hand, it would tend to increase employment, as sufficient hands must be engaged to conduct the business on lines that would meet with public support and approval. They should ever remember that the man who got drunk was the exception, and not the rule. They had only to go to Turkey to see the effect caused by the banishment of the sale of all liquor, and contrast the Mohammedan with the polish and refinement of the Anglo-Saxon race, and then draw their conclusions.

Mr. Oates replied. While he agreed that they should have the best of accommodation that could be provided, he contended that it could be obtained at temperance houses equally as well, and perhaps better, than in the hotels. Those who had run the coffee palace at Ringwood in the past on teetotal lines had made it a success. He mentioned that at Ararat there was a temperance boarding house which was preferred by visitors to any one of the seven hotels in that town. His opponent had said it was the bar trade that made the hotel a success and enabled them to give the (alleged) better meals. This was owing to the immense profit derived from the sale of alcoholic liquors. He would like to tell them if he had a hotel and were allowed to sell opium he could afford to give them board and lodging for nothing—so great was the profit he would derive from the sale of the drug. Alcohol was not a necessity, as thousands could testify. If they had a hotel near the station the drunks would be sleeping in the railway carriages at night. Seventy-five per cent. of crime was directly due to drink. It tended to degrade, and was productive of disease; so much so that medical men were vetoing it from the hospitals. He was wholly and soully against the liquor traffic, and if he had his way he would entirely wipe it out. From an economic point of view it was also a great hindrance, as money was spent on liquor which should go to provide the necessaries and comforts of life.

Mr. Wakeham said there were about 2000 inhabitants in Ringwood at the present time, and as the town was increasing he considered that a modern and up-to-date hotel, conducted

... have to be, would be a great asset to Ringwood. There may be four or five people in the place who would "go over the fence," but the great majority knew how to conduct themselves. As a rule commercial travellers did not care to go to boarding houses, and always gave hotels the preference.

Mr. Parker said a good hotel would be a benefit to the town, owing to the fact that at present they could not get the accommodation here that travellers and others required. They could get better service in Croydon and Lilydale. He said this though he was a great temperance man.

Miss Madden said the seven hotels named by Mr. Oates in Ararat were always free of typhoid, while every year this dreaded disease was rampant at the temperance boarding house.

Mr. Madden twitted Mr. Oates with not knowing his Bible, and that the great Teacher in the first miracle he performed turned the water into wine. He instanced the failure of temperance hotels to make them pay, and stated that in towns where they had been established they had proved a failure.

Mr. Greenwood said the wine in the east was different to the fermented wine sold in hotels. He was sure the great Teacher had never made the wine which was a curse to mankind. The reason why hotels paid was because a certain class went there instead of going home. He had no time for the drink, and was sure men would not suffer much harm from drinking overmuch tea.

The two chief speakers having replied, the chairman closed the meeting by thanking them for their attendance, and hoped they had enjoyed the discussion.

1923



8/6/23  
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### RINGWOOD.

#### "FUN ON THE BRISTOL."

On Thursday evening the annual entertainment in aid of St. Mary's Church was held in the Mechanics' Institute. Despite the inclemency of the weather and the muddy state of the roads, there was a large attendance. The piece selected for the occasion was the laughable farce, "Fun on the Bristol," interspersed with a musical program. All the characters were well sustained. Mr. J. Muldowney, who took the part of the Widow O'Brien, with his rich Irish brogue and witticisms was the mainstay, and highly pleased the audience with the way he interpreted the character. As the piece is full of many embarrassing situations, the solution of the perplexities which embarrassed the actors caught on with the audience, who demonstrated their approval in rapturous applause. The singing of Miss Doris Hunter in the musical part formed an excellent feature, as did the duet "All Over Nothing at all," by Miss Edna and Master Will Luscombe. Baby Thelma Luscombe for her singing and dancing was highly applauded. The performance throughout was creditable to the performers, and pleasing to the spectators.

1923

At the meeting of the local Debating Society on Monday, Mr. Howard, M.A., gave an address on "Marriage and Divorce." In his opening remarks he traced in a cursory manner how marriages were effected almost from time immemorial up to the present. In reviewing the marriage ceremony he entirely disagreed with the woman being forced to say she would "obey." She had no more right to take this vow than the man had, and it should be eliminated from the marriage ceremony. In dealing with divorce he considered it was only right and just that when couples were unsuited to each other they should have the privilege of dissolving the marriage tie; especially should this be the case were the nuptial vow violated by either party. In the debate that ensued the lecturer was tersely answered by those who dissented from his views, especially regarding divorce. They contended that the marriage tie could not be dissolved, and quoted scripture in support of their contentions. The debate was a spirited one, and well conducted by all who took part in it.

24/4/23  
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Should Women go into Parliament? —It is difficult to reply to this without appearing to be somewhat inconsistent. There are numbers of really intellectual, capable women of strong personality, and possibly some of them may be specially gifted with powers for public speaking. These may be termed the exceptions; but even they are not justified in following a public career if in so doing they neglect home duties. Frequently the type of woman we find in the public world is one who is tired of housework and the dullness of home life, and who wishes to appear in the limelight; she therefore adopts a pet scheme, and goes forth to proclaim it; her husband (if she has one) is usually henpecked, and sits at home mending his socks, or, if he has any spirit at all, he runs away with someone else while his wife is at the meetings. Here, too, we have the difficulty of temperament. Women as a rule are not so thick-skinned as men—they are far more sensitive. Some men can be deadly enemies politically, and yet remain quite friendly in private life; but I doubt if many women would act in the same way. Their dispositions are different, and in the turmoil of parliamentary life there would be much strife and bitterness of spirit for the women. I have already mentioned exceptions. As examples take the two lady politicians in England—Lady Astor and Mrs. Winteringham. They have certainly worked great reforms, and no doubt women of this type can do much in Parliament in the interests of women and children, etc. But let the ordinary woman be content to remain comparatively in the background of politics—certainly not as an onlooker, but rather as a prompter to the man on the stage, taking an intelligent interest in the proceedings, and using her influence to uphold the honor and integrity of our country. There is ample scope for women to use their intellect and energy in work amongst their own sex. Half the women who vote at elections do so in utter ignorance of the principles for which they are voting. It is the duty of their more enlightened sisters to educate them in politics, so that they may use their own judgment, and not merely do as they are told. In the olden days of chivalry, woman, in the imagination of man, was placed on a kind of pedestal; she was supposed to be a being endowed with many virtues, and to whom men paid homage

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At the same time, she was an absolute nonentity in worldly affairs. Her opinion (if she dared to offer it) was of no account; and it was certainly time she woke up and asserted herself, to demand more liberty of thought and speech; but she is in danger of descending too far, for as surely as she places herself on an equality with man, so surely will she lose her status in his regard, and she cannot expect the consideration due to her as a woman.

Nearly all the members present spoke on the subject, some agreeing with and others differing from the views and conclusions arrived at by the two leading debaters, but all were unanimous that the essays were deserving of the highest praise for the lucid way in which the subject was handled from their respective points of view, and they were accorded a well-deserved vote of thanks.

The members of the club derive pleasure and profit from attending these meetings, and it is a pity they are not better appreciated.

Mail

RINGWOOD.

16/2/23

DEBATING SOCIETY.

There was a large attendance at the monthly meeting of the above society on Monday evening, the principal feature being the large number of ladies who were present. This seems to be the only institution in Ringwood which has any attraction for the ladies, a fair number of whom are present at every meeting—and they evince deep interest in the debates.

The subject dealt with at the meeting on Monday night was one, if it were debated until doomsday, would have very little light thrown on it beyond mere conjecture. It was also a subject that was very difficult to handle, and great care had to be exercised so that nothing would be said that would or could be construed into a reflection upon the orthodox tenets of those present. Mr. A. V. Greenwood undertook the difficult task of proving that "A rich man could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." His main contention was that the possession of riches, owing to the facilities and opportunities they afforded the possessor to gratify his tastes

and desires and the craving they created for the exercise of despotic power, which was invariably manifested in the oppression of the weak and poor in order to augment his riches, made a man unfit to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He instanced the case of powerful money magnates who had gained a monopoly in the particular industry in which they had devoted their energies, fleecing the public by the inordinate prices which they fixed for their wares. He said the great Teacher had plainly told in his parables that rich men could not enter the Kingdom, and quoted in support of his argument the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The answer given to Dives was, "Remember that thou in thy lifetime had good things and Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." This tended unmistakably to prove that rich men had no place in the Kingdom of Heaven. The creation of wealth tended to impoverish the mind, and as a natural consequence evil was the result, and no evil-minded or wicked man could enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mr. Madden replied to Mr. Greenwood, and in doing so showed that all the conclusions arrived at by his opponent were not only inaccurate and illogical, but were opposed to all the canons of commonsense, justice and equity; and opposed to the teaching and examples mentioned in the Bible. To argue that a man because he was rich was to be doomed to eternal perdition was monstrous. The poor man could be just as vain, proud and vile as the rich man. He instanced the cases of Abraham, Joseph and other old testament worthies who were remarkable for their wealth and the power they exercised, as being noble examples of rich men who were now in Heaven, as a complete refutation of the thesis set up by Mr. Greenwood—that no rich man could enter there.

Several other members present also spoke to the subject, including Miss Madden, who said Mr. Greenwood had misread the passages of Scripture he had quoted, and omitted to state that it was the LOVE of money and not the coin itself, that was stated to be the root of evil. She contended that a rich man could be as kind, gentle, and as loving a character as any poor man.

1923



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RINGWOOD. *Ch.*  
10/2/23

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1923

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*Chronicle*

RINGWOOD.

A RATIONALIST LECTURE.

There was a large attendance at the Ringwood Hall on Thursday evening, 17th inst., when a lecture was delivered by Mr. J. S. Langley, his subject being, "Can the Teachings of Christ be applied to and carried out in the present day?"

In his opening remarks Mr. Langley said he made it a rule to be his own chairman, and while he would concede to anyone in the audience the right to reply, at the same time he reserved to himself the right to conduct the meeting as he thought proper. Messrs. Madden, A. V. Greenwood and Edmonds had consented to reply to the lecturer, who essayed to prove that the teachings of Christ could not be adopted and carried out as society was at present constituted. In proof of his contention he quoted isolated verses from the New Testament, without mentioning the context, and interpreted the passages in a literal sense. He instanced the case of anyone taking up a dangerous snake and the drinking of a deadly poison without any harm accruing. They well knew what would be the result if they handled a dangerous reptile or drank poison; therefore such actions as those could not be applied to society. Then they were told that if they had faith they could remove mountains, and so forth. This could not be done. They were also commanded "not to resist evil," and "to love their enemies." What would be the consequence if they conformed to such a law? Another text quoted was that "they must not lay up treasures on earth." This was also impracticable, and could not therefore be incorporated into every-day life. And what would happen if they took "no thought for the morrow" He also laid stress on the scripture which said, "Blessed are

they who, not having seen, have believed," and argued that a code like that could not be adopted. He said in conclusion that he could go on enumerating instance after instance in support of his contention, which was that the teachings of Christ were not applicable to the present day, and he would like those gentlemen who were announced to reply to him to answer the points he had raised.

Mr. Madden was the first to reply. He asked the lecturer if he knew what Christianity was. Mr. Langley objected to this question. Mr. Madden then asked him if he (the lecturer) understood the meaning of the word "Jesus." Mr. Langley objected to being catechised in that way, saying he had never mentioned the name "Jesus," which was derived from Joshua. Mr. Madden then told the lecturer that he did not know what Christianity was, and called him "a disturber." He also moved that Cr. Mackinlay take the chair. With this the lecturer ordered him off the platform, and there was considerable disorder. When order was restored Mr. Madden, after referring to the decalogue, handed the lecturer a catechism, and advised him to read and study it, when he would have some idea of what Christianity was.

Mr. Greenwood said that the teachings of Christ were not only applicable to the present day, but they were adopted and practised to a very great extent. They had only to look to the self-denying labors of the missionaries, the humane work carried out at the hospitals, wages boards, Arbitration courts, benevolent societies, insurance offices; maternal grants, all of which were actively carrying out the principles and Christian charity inculcated by Christ, which were the means of leavening and enriching human life. The glorious gospel was the message of glad tidings which had left its impress upon the British nation and made it what it was to-day—the grandest empire in the world, the Union Jack being the emblem of equity justice and truth, all of which were due to the teachings of the man Christ Jesus.

Mr. Edmonds in his reply dealt more with the intellectual and historical side of the question, but as there was much interruption it was difficult to catch the tenor of his remarks.

Our reporter then left, being of the opinion that where there are two parties holding contrary opinions, as far apart as the poles, little or no good will result from disputations like the one under notice. The old couplet still holds good:

"The man convinced against his will  
Is of the same opinion still."

1924



# DEBATING SOCIETY

4/5/23  
DEBATING SOCIETY.

One of the most profitable and enjoyable societies that has ever been established in Ringwood is the Debating Society, which holds its meetings every Monday night. A number of kindred spirits, a good number of whom belong to the weaker sex, meet together to discuss all kinds of subjects, when they have a real good time. They differ on almost every topic, but they do so in a courteous and affable manner, and it is no exaggeration to say that many a wrinkle is learnt during the discussion, and they go away wiser than when they came. On Monday night last the subject was, "Should militarism be encouraged?" The affirmative was taken by Mr. Edmonds, who, in the course of a thoughtful address, contended that it was essential in order to maintain the integrity of the Empire, and to prevent foreign invasion the military spirit should be encouraged. The only way to command respect—that is, viewed from a national standpoint—was to have such an army, and so well trained and equipped that it could repel any foe, and was so formidable from a fighting standard that it could cope, if not vanquish, any enemy. It did not follow from this that he favored the creation of a military system that was to be autocratic and desired to make war on weaker nations simply for no other reason than that of conquest and gain. He also contended that the military system stood for right against might, and was the only safeguard in the maintenance of peace and good will among the nations.

Mr. Pike, who follows the occupation of an orchardist, read a paper in which he cursorily glanced at all the facts and arguments that could be adduced in order to banish the fallacy that war was essential to the well being of a nation, or that it was in any way productive of preserving peace and preventing one nation from encroaching upon the rights of another. He would like to know what good had ever emanated from a war, which tended to engender, as a rule, all the brutal instincts of human nature. Even the victors were losers. In proof of this contention he instanced the Franco-German war of 1870. Though Germany won and got her indemnity from France, her industries and trade was impoverished for ten years, while France, the defeated nation, prospered. As a rule old men made the wars and the young men had to do the fighting, although they had not raised a finger to create the carnage and suffering which followed in the wake of war. Then,

again, was it fair that some men should have to go and be killed while others remained at home and made colossal fortunes. War would soon cease if the wealthy were taxed and placed on the same rate of pay as the soldiers. Then, again, it was revolting to think that they should settle their differences in the same barbaric way as did the ancients. Arbitration and justice should be brought to bear upon all national questions, and if this were done in the right spirit, and

with the view of arriving at a just and amicable settlement, there would be no need to resort to a clash of arms and to keep up the spirit of militarism with its abnormal expense, which could be put to much better use.

A spirited discussion followed, but most of the speakers favored the maintenance of an army to keep the peace and prevent the Japs from coming to Australia.

1923

RINGWOOD. 25/5/23

## "SHOULD WOMEN PREACH, PROPOSE, OR ENTER PARLIAMENT?"

This was the interesting subject that was debated at the meeting of the Ringwood Debating Society on Monday evening, when it was dealt with by two of the lady members—Misses Lade and Porteous. The following are the essays which they read, and both will well repay perusal. The first is by Miss Lade.

It gives me great pleasure to affirm that women should propose, should preach, and become members of Parliament.

It is my intention to deal first with preaching and Parliament, and proposing, which is of the least importance, can be left till the last.

The opinion is held by the majority of people that the home is woman's natural sphere. In this I quite agree, but if she has the ability and leisure to take an active part in public affairs, there is no reason why she should not do so. But to-night I wish to speak more particularly of the women who have no home ties, and who form quite a large percentage of Australia's population. They must have some outlet for their energies, and, unlike a man, who is content with a hobby, they feel it their duty to be of some definite use in the world, and to make their influence felt. Through what better medium can this be accomplished than that of the Church and Parliament? Women as a whole

are not as strong physically as men, but are endowed with equal brain power; therefore, in any walk in life where brain more than physical strength is required, there is no reason why they should not enter into competition with the sterner sex. It is a recognised fact that women are more religious than men. This is shown by the preponderance of women at any place of worship, and by the active part they take in any Christian effort. The learned theologian is not necessarily the most efficient preacher. Women, by their instinctive knowledge of human nature, may be more influential than men, with their hard, cold logic. Moreover, women's preaching is practical and consistent, and these qualities carry more weight than much oratory. In Parliament, with their ability of seeing all round a question, where a man can see only one side, they would be invaluable in the framing of laws, especially those concerning better housing, care of children, and all matters pertaining to domestic life. For instance, to give a homely illustration, would we be paying 2/5 per lb. for butter, when the same Australian butter can be bought in England for 1/11 per lb., if we have a say in the matter. The same occurs with other products. There must be something radically wrong when we have to pay such prices for things we produce in our own country in such large quantities. These matters concern women vitally. It is clearly shown, by the forming of so many organisations, clubs and societies, that women are fast coming into their own, and will make their influence felt throughout the community at large.

I would like just here to quote from the Italian Prime Minister's speech of welcome to the International Women's Suffrage Alliance held recently at Rome, including 43 nations, including Australia. He said, "So far as I am concerned, I feel authorised to declare that the Fascist Government, if the unforeseen does not happen, can vouch that it will grant the several classes of women the right to vote, beginning with the municipal elections, and following with the political elections. By proceeding in stages no disastrous effects will ensue, such as are predicted by some pessimists. On the contrary, very probably it will have beneficial consequences, because the women will bring into exercise with the new right their fundamental qualities of foresight, balance and wisdom." The president (Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt) thanked the Government and people of Italy for the welcome. "Our congress," she said, "represents a step forward in the world movement among women which demands the repeal of antiquated so called women's laws and

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customs, and the substitution of the fact that a woman is a human being. Our congress represents the women of 43 out of 60 nations in the world. We have delegates from 28 nations, whose women are voters on equal terms with men. Among them are members of Parliament, and councilors in great cities. The delegates who are still pleading for the franchise represent 15 nations only. The majority of us are enfranchised, and form part of the collective rulers of the nations. We stand for educated men and women, for schools for all children, for work and good wages, for better homes, and for the more tender and scientific care of children. In Australia all of the women have the vote. Of all continents South America is the only one where no woman votes, yet it is the continent of republics. Our suffrage movement has girdled the earth. We are an army, but our only weapon is an appeal for justice."

Women do not want to get into Parliament, some might think, because it is a soft job, and a nice little salary, but they will be of some use, and it goes without saying, some ornament, too.

With regard to the question, should women propose, the time seems hardly ripe, although, considering the progress women have made in business and professions, the time will come when

they feel themselves qualified to take the initiative in proposals of marriage. I never heard of one who did propose, and have read of only one. She was a new woman—a very new woman—and by profession an estate agent; after she had proposed and been refused, she didn't feel quite so new. This I would like to say to the credit of the man in the story, he was a sport and didn't tell.

The Negative—By Miss Porteous.

Should Women Propose?—I don't know whether this means should the present order be reversed and women propose instead of men, or should women propose as well as men. If the former, it would complicate matters very much for the men, as a few favored ones—the best looking and the wealthies would receive hundreds of proposals, while the majority would not receive any, and there would be fewer marriages. In any case, it would be a most undignified proceeding. No self-respecting woman, no matter how much she admired a man, could ask him to let her share his worldly goods. There might be chaos in some communities, wild, excited females rushing hither and thither in search of prey, while all the eligible men, seeing the light of conquest in the eye of every single woman of their acquaintance, would carefully avoid her for fear she should "pop the question." The young man of to-day thinks he is bestowing a tremendous favor when

he asks a girl to marry him—how insufferably condescending would he be if she proposed to him. One can imagine a young lady saying to the young man of her choice, "Will you be mine?" I wonder if he would blush and say, "Well—er—this is rather sudden," and then ask for a week to think it over, or perhaps refer her to his ma.

Should Women Preach?—Every woman has a perfect right to express her opinion on any matter, but when it comes to occupying the pulpit, or speaking from a public platform, she is out of place to say the least. There are some occupations which are essentially masculine, just as some are essentially feminine. Men and women are constituted so differently, both in physique and temperament, and had God or nature intended woman to do the masculine work of preaching, she would have been provided with the necessary equipment; she would certainly have had a speaking voice which could be heard further than the front seats of a large building. In these days when there is such a craze among women for taking up men's vocations, there are few candidates for manual labor such as farm or orchard work. Woman realizes her physical limitations there, and though, by even a wide stretch of imagination preaching can scarcely termed "manual" labor, there are almost as great limitations for her here. All her intellectual ability is wasted, and her words of no effect, if she lacks the qualities necessary to give force and power to their utterance. In spite of her inability to make an efficient preacher, I have no doubt that if the churches were to employ one or two attractive lady curates there would then be no need to ask the question, "Why don't men go to church?"

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