

within the possibility of the poor gentlewoman, and enables her to present a brave front to the world whatever be her circumstances.

Quite a new feature of the Pioneer Club is its political debating society. The principle of this society is, if women are to have the franchise, the inevitable result will be women in the House. And so these women are laboriously undertaking the necessary training. It would seem that their argument is based on the principles of sound common sense.

Given the franchise it will lie in the power of women to vote only for the man who will uphold the entrance of female members into Parliament, with the result that in

And the mock debates on the leading political questions of the day are often worth listening to, for these debates are conducted in due form, and everything is done after the pattern of St. Stephen's. There are the opposition benches, and the ayes and the noes are counted. In short, these parliamentary evenings furnish a distinct proof that the woman recognizes (what our labour candidates and Irish members so conspicuously fail to do) the value of a parliamentary training. I take it if the men trained for certain offices as carefully as these women do for possible office, the scandals attached to our House of Commons would be avoided, and the time of the House



M. Dunne,

Henley, on the Taieri River, a favourite cycling resort.

Photo.

the long run women will get the long-coveted honour of a seat in the House.

I believe at one time (I think it was in the time of the Tudors) lady abbesses were allowed a seat, and only once did a lady abbess avail herself of the privilege, and then she came under the escort of two bishops.

I never wish to see women admitted to Parliament, but if ever the day does come when we have our lady members, I would fain see my sisters rise to the occasion and show themselves worthy.

In connection with the debating society already referred to, there is a mock House of Commons, female members for every county, a Speaker, Prime Minister, and so on.

would not be wasted by the useless babble of the wind-bag obstructionist.

But apart from this aspect of the case, a political training is simply invaluable to a woman. It teaches her for one thing to read the newspapers intelligently, and how few of our so-called educated women can do this. It teaches her the meaning and value of politics, and of political economy, above all things it teaches her the inalienable right of private judgment on public matters, always provided that judgment is based on sound premises. It compels her to read and study history and historical precedent; it gives her freedom of speech, and the power to ventilate her own views with clearness and lucidity. As iron sharpeneth iron,