

Luckily for her, she has that saving sense of humour without which no human being is complete. When called on to speak at that meeting, she came forward and looked all round at her audience—which numbered many thousands of people—as if she would fain read in their faces how much sympathy she might expect; and after a little began her address. She spoke quietly at first, but with power, and as she dwelt on the wrongs of little children caused by the odious drink-traffic, she grew eloquent and impassionate, not with a surface eloquence of high-flown words, but with a natural eloquence born of deep feeling. When at length she paused a moment, the audience burst into such sympathetic applause as removed all doubt as to her having touched the hearts of her hearers. Nor has she power to touch hearts only. If her own is soft, her head is of a kind which well balances that (so-called) weakness. She is a woman who knows of what she is speaking. She has lectured for the W.C.T.U. in the States for many years, and so has facts and figures at her fingers' ends. Her mind is well stored, her memory is good, and her deductions are logical. Truly a gifted woman and a great platform speaker! I heard her speak afterwards at the Monster Meeting in the Albert Hall, where over 12,000 people had assembled, and there her words were equally effective and well received, while her voice carried to the farthest corner of the upper gallery of that immense building. Mr Leonard Isitt was quite as much impressed with Mrs Hoffman's powers as I was, for, the first time we met after that occasion, we found, on comparing notes, that we had both been thinking how good it would be if we could induce New Zealand to invite her. Mr Leonard and I interviewed Miss Willard together on the subject the day on which the Convention Members and friends were

assembled at Reigate Priory, and she entered warmly into our plan, almost commanding "Clara" to go without any further consideration. Mrs Hoffman, however, thought she should wait for our invitation. She also felt she would like to see her son again before starting for the Antipodes, but she promised us that she would come, providing Australia as well as New Zealand invited her. Miss Willard said that if Australia joined in our invitation the World's Treasury would be responsible for her passage from America (one way). Some time afterwards I called to see her at the pretty rooms she was at that time sharing with Miss Helen Hood, in Ashley Gardens, London, and she told me that Miss Willard had written her to say that she should go to New Zealand with me in the "Gothic," and begin work there "straight away." She, however, was fully occupied till November, and as the "Gothic" sailed at the end of that month she would have had no time for preparation. "I know Miss Willard," she said to me, laughing; "she would start me or any one off to the other end of the world tomorrow, without either purse or scrip, like the disciples of old. Like all great organisers, she plans outlines of work only, and naturally she has no time for detail. But she is a grand woman," she concluded, "and if she stopped to think how many garments we should each need for our equipment she would never have accomplished the great work of our life." Mrs Hoffman is decidedly American in accent, and has many of the peculiar expressions used in her country, which, to my mind, gives an added charm and novelty to her utterances. I trust that New Zealand will soon be welcoming her, and that with her help we shall accomplish great things.

MISS AGNES WESTON

was one of the most interesting women at the above-mentioned Convention

meetings. She always appeared with a body-guard of at least two naval men, while at the monster meeting there were nine or ten in her train, these last having come for the purpose of receiving gold medals for having been true to their abstinence pledges for a great many years, and also working with Miss Weston in getting others to become abstainers. The two who formed her special escort were fine upstanding, manly-looking fellows, and my heart went out to them at once. Indeed, to this day I cannot make up my mind whether these sailors or Miss Weston attracted me most. The manner in which they waited on her was most touching. They followed her as she came on the platform, never sitting down until she was seated first. When she stood to speak they rose, gave a naval salute, and stood immediately behind her, "presenting arms." They were always ready to put her cloak on when she had finished, and it was all done with military promptness, and yet with such tender respect. Miss Weston is evidently proud of her sailors, and they of her. She is a stout, motherly-looking woman of, I should say, between forty and fifty, with a kindly face and a pleasant, musical voice. She speaks simply and unaffectedly, telling with pride and pleasure how many noble fellows had kept their pledges through thick and thin, and despite many temptations to the contrary; and of how many had joined the total abstinence army during the year. She bestrews her addresses with nautical terms in a very amusing way, narrating how some brave sailor had "stuck to his guns" or "nailed his colours to the mast," as the case might be. This habit of hers evidently appeals to her hearers, judging from their demonstrations of sympathy. Miss Weston has done, and is doing, a noble work among sailors—indeed, its value can hardly be estimated—and she is