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THE MOTHERS' UNION TODAY

THE PRESIDING MEMBER
AND THE DEANERY
THE ENROLLING MEMBER
AND THE BRANCH

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*Dedicated to all Deanery Presiding
Members, Enrolling Members, and
other Official Workers
present and future*

BY

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THE MOTHERS' UNION TO-DAY.

The Background.

The leaflets under the title "The Mothers' Union To-day" have a particular aim in view. They aim at more than just showing the organization of the Mothers' Union; rather they show the organization at work to-day under circumstances and conditions vastly different to those when the Mothers' Union started. The difference in conditions is far too little realised to-day by Mothers' Union workers, who very often cling to outdated methods.

The things the Mothers' Union stands for can never be outdated, but the differences in the world where such a stand has to be made must be recognized. Since 1914 social and domestic life has been swept into a whirlpool of problems undreamed of by Mary Sumner. Maybe her great far-sighted wisdom would have dealt with these problems, had she been alive to-day, with a temerity not always present in our dealing therewith.

Actually the serenity and security of family and parochial life, cut to a pattern and comparatively undisturbed by the growing pressure of social and world conditions began to be shaken after the death of Queen Victoria, and were literally shaken to pieces by the cataclysm of the first world war. After 1918 came the surge of youthful intolerance against restraint, the reaction to suffering in an orgy of pleasure, the break with tradition in morality and faith, and the beginning of to-day's unease.

A Fingertip Hold.

What began in 1918 worked up to what seemed sometimes an orgy of self-expression. A second world war has left the home and the community of the parish with only a fingertip hold on the traditions of the past. The few maintain that hold, the majority have let go in the "I couldn't care

less" spirit of to-day. That is a condensed picture of to-day's background against which the Mothers' Union seems often to be forcing methods and organization of another age. It is literally the forcing of Victorian wooden square pegs into slick modern chromium round holes.

Is all well with the Mothers' Union ?

The three objects of the Mothers' Union know no date, as we have said ; their challenge rings to-day as it rang when Mary Sumner thought them out, prayed over them and handed them down to us. But the people to whom we present these challenges, about marriage, about children, about faith, and the surroundings in which we present them, and the methods we use, must be to-day utterly different from what they were even twenty years ago. Yet so often the method, the plan of attack and the lay-out of our Mothers' Union work stay put in the old ways.

The old Branch plan was an unbreakable succession of monthly meetings, with a comfortable cosy little talk from a speaker, who generally had no guidance as to what her subject should be, and was left to meander happily on pastures of her own choosing. Following the talk came the cup of tea and the bun. "Did you have a nice meeting?" "Yes, 'twere a lovely meeting and a lovely speaker!" "What did 'er say?" "Couldn't rightly say what 'er said but 'twere a lovely meeting." That often happens. Of course there always were good speakers, and good planning and organization, but in the main the Branch ticked over in the "us never have, and us never will" state of mind. In spite of some dullness and sameness the members came regularly to the village meeting at Little Muddelcombe, or to the town meeting of Bustleford. Then rival possibilities arose, Little Muddelcombe started a branch of the Women's Institutes, Bustleford went all out for a branch of the Townswomen's Guild. To make jam, learn about civic conditions and sing "Jerusalem" were counter attractions not to be dismissed as of no matter.

The Mothers' Union at the Centre became increasingly aware of the situation. Excellent short courses for study and discussion were put out, and are constantly being put out for branch use. Greater care was taken over the training of speakers, Diocesan Speakers Training Days are held regularly. Mass Meetings, Diocesan and Deanery Services and Festivals always arouse enthusiasm. There was the *Call to Renewal*, the *Rededication and Affirmation of Promises* and more recently *The Call to Evangelism* to shake us out of inertia, but having been shaken there is often a tendency to turn over again and to let things be.

Yet, in spite of all this, there does however, often seem to be something wrong in the Deaneries and Branches. Scapegoats can always be made of the Deanery Presiding Member, or of the Enrolling Member, or of (or *and* of) the incumbent. It is a fact that central and diocesan planning does not always penetrate to the branch.

Do we Grow ?

Such a society of women must always incline to an elderly membership, since members join for life, therefore our death rate is high. But all is not entirely right with our intake rate. It is there that something must be done. "*The Fellowship of Marriage*" at one time seemed the solution. It had a young membership and produced many of to-day's leaders, and it attracted *young* mothers. Then, after many years, a new spurt became necessary, and a Campaign was started, with new housing estates in view. Out of this grew the Young Members' Department in the Mothers' Union which has done splendid work in the way of starting Young Wives' Groups, sponsored by the Mothers' Union.

A Great Crisis.

Here then is the background behind the Mothers' Union, against which the great work needed to-day has to be done. The great work of a great society in a great crisis! Such work needs courage in the hearts of all official workers, courage to adapt and if need be to change drastically ways and means of attack. There must also be courage to present

unchanging truths in a changing world. There is no question of competing against secular societies, but there is a question of presenting the things we stand for in a way that will arrest and hold members old and young. We have wonderful material ready to our hand, as indeed we have wonderful facts to present, and truths to tell, and help to give. But what we have *to do*, and *our way of doing it*, when we get down to the deanery and the branch level, seems so often to misfire. And to misfire in what we are aiming at, or should be aiming at to-day, is a tragedy.

The Foreground.

Somehow to-day in this world of unease we have not only to make the Mothers' Union live up to its great position of influence and authority, *and make no mistake it is a great position*, but make it live also in the deanery and the branch. It must live in the heart of every old great-grandmother member, so that she knows she still has a part to fill, and it must live in the heart of every young wife and mother whom we draw into the branches and whose help we need. "Not as things were, but as they are" must be our slogan. It has never been easy to witness to Christian Faith and Practice; to-day, with everything pulling in the opposite direction, it becomes more and more difficult. Therein lies our boundless opportunity. We *have* something to tell, and we have sound counsel to give. We are workers together in a great Fellowship of Witness, but . . . are we efficient ?

The Obstacles.

It is true that we face difficulties undreamed of in Mary Sumner's day. It is also, alas, true that we tend to be defeatist too easily, when it comes to presenting the Mothers' Union to a world that does not seem to care. Vast housing estates on the one hand, tragic lack of houses on the other, increasing state responsibility for home and children, the cinema, television, pools, parental authority undermined and not asserted, broken marriages, the Divorce Court, the Children's Court and the delinquent child, the non-recognition of the word Sin, materialism in every outlook on life

surely enough to defeat most of us ? And yet, we have been born in just such a time as this, on purpose to set things right. One way of helping to set things right is through our work in the Mothers' Union. Nearly all those problems just listed which bewilder us to-day can be dealt with in our Mothers' Union teaching, through our practical representation of our three objects, through our sympathy and friendship with those who are making homes in these conditions; encouraging those who win through to, and achieve, a Christian home, and directing wisely those who fall by the way and are content with a sub-Christian standard or no standard at all. However alive the centre and the diocese may be in their Mothers' Union work, and there is a really high standard being set to-day, the two king pins in the Mothers' Union remain—the Deanery and the Branch.

The Deanery Presiding Member.

The Deanery Presiding Member has the outline of her work on her official card, signed by her Diocesan President and given to her on her admission to office. She will be wise to possess herself also of *The Official Workers' Guide to the Constitution and the Organization of the Mothers' Union*. What about the Deanery Committee? Does it really consist, as it says on the card, of the Enrolling Member of each branch in her deanery and of one or more elected members from each Branch Committee? Where this is so the Deanery Committee meeting, after each Diocesan Council (and possibly a third time in the year entirely on their own deanery business, with a speaker or discussion), becomes a live centre of interest.

The relationship between the Presiding Member and her Enrolling Members becomes a close and personal relationship. Their work and their difficulties are her concern. She should visit each branch at least once a year, and she will accept invitations to the various branch functions as having a prior claim on her time.

She must learn to curb the wayward, enthuse the un-enthusiastic, encourage the fainthearted, and endure the stupid. She must labour under no fond delusion that all

Enrolling Members read notices, or the *Workers' Paper*, or the directions given on any Form or Report. She will make sure that a copy of the *Workers' Paper* is taken by every Enrolling Member for circulation to her branch committee, several copies if the committee is a large one, paid for from branch funds. She will tell the Enrolling Members about the new literature. The quickest method is to provide each Enrolling Member with a little packet of the new literature (never expensive) rather than for them to turn over literature aimlessly—or hurriedly—on their way to the door and their bus.

She should be in touch with the parochial clergy, and she will learn to tread carefully over any branch difficulty in which the clergy are involved. She will also learn the art of reviving lapsed branches, and of helping to start new ones. She must be able to receive confidences from all and sundry, and, above all, she must be able to be silent when silence is needed. She will be at pains to present the information from the Diocesan Council in such a way that the Enrolling Members will be interested and co-operative.

She should give complete trust to her Deanery Secretary and Treasurer, and should train herself to spot leaders on her committee. Her own successor may well be there! She should keep her eyes open for fresh diocesan representatives whom she can bring to the notice of her Diocesan President. Diocesan Presidents should be able to count on their Deanery Presiding Members for such far-sightedness, especially in the matter of discovering potential speakers.

It is wise to get the Diocesan Representatives to come and speak to the Deanery Committee about their work on the Central Committees where they represent the diocese. This gives good ideas to the Enrolling Members for their branches. Another mark of efficiency in the Deanery Presiding Member is when she sees to it that diocesan communications sent to her to pass on to her Enrolling Members really are passed on and are not left on her desk to be passed on, probably too late, at the next committee.

Preparation for Membership.

The Deanery Presiding Member will make sure that the Enrolling Members do really know how to prepare for membership. Lack of proper preparation is one of the weakest links in the Mothers' Union Official Workers Chain. A Deanery Presiding Member who from the Chair at her Deanery Committee Meeting can stage a one-woman act, and pretend to prepare a prospective member on the Three Objects, will be sowing good seed.

If her deanery is scattered and transport difficult she will change the place of meeting for the Deanery Committee from time to time. She will take trouble over transport problems, being herself knowledgeable over bus routes or trains, or people able to offer lifts. And there will always be a cup of tea. She will be prepared to call committees in the morning if the majority prefer it from time to time. She will hold the reins loosely, *but she will hold them.*

Enrolling Members must be kept on their toes over report forms, and she will be on her own toes over the deanery report form. Report forms are not just Mothers' Union red tape, but vital pieces of information.

Elections.

The Deanery Presiding Member is elected to hold office by the Enrolling Members in the deanery, that is by the Deanery Committee, with the approval of the Rural Dean. Every three years she stands for re-election. She is not elected for life, though sometimes it seems as if she were. Many dioceses have now adopted the nine-years plan, that is, three periods of three years, as is in use at the centre. This has many advantages, and is well worth diocesan consideration. It is easier for the elected, and for those who elect, and it ensures new life in the organization.

The Deanery Presiding Member Herself.

Briefly we have seen the opportunities, the golden opportunities, which lie before the Deanery Presiding Member as she takes office. This is one of the most worthwhile pieces

of work on the Mothers' Union. A close personal relationship to a band of women who will become friends in a very real sense ; a chance to inspire and to guide, and to bring all that the centre and the diocese stand for into the vision of these Enrolling Members. They are often tired and disheartened, so often also they miss much that would change their whole outlook on their Mothers' Union work. It is in the power of the Deanery Presiding Member to send them away from the Deanery Committee with a new slant on their work, a new courage in their hearts, and an ever-increasing knowledge and understanding of the Mothers' Union. This means a sense of dedication also in the heart of the Deanery Presiding Member—which will become apparent in the prayer and intercession (sent in by the Enrolling Members) with which she starts her Deanery Committee. She will find herself able to arrange a Quiet Day or a Quiet Afternoon for the Deanery Committee because of all that the deanery work comes to mean to her. The Enrolling Members get many criticisms, but they get far fewer criticisms when they are guided wisely by their Presiding Members. It is a most repaying office to hold and a deanery so led becomes a force in these days when leadership is sorely needed.

The Enrolling Member.

Now what about the Enrolling Member ? On the official card she gets two and a quarter pages of advice on her duties ! She may be the first Enrolling Member of a new branch, or she may have become the Enrolling Member of a long-established branch, whereon other Enrolling Members have worked their will. Her predecessor may have had domestic help ; she probably has none. If she lives at the vicarage she certainly has none. Behind her there is the help of the deanery and the diocese, but she is the queen of her own branch kingdom. It is true that she is hardly likely to-day to be the sort of Enrolling Member who says at uncertain intervals "I must really get up a nice meeting for my dear mothers," though some such Enrolling Members do still exist. She may, on the other hand, over-organize and hustle, or she may muddle through, the Mothers' Union

branch being just another of those things which has to be fitted in to everything else as best it may. But there she is, the Enrolling Member in the forefront of the parish life, with a chance of combating, not giving in, under to-day's distracting problems. There will be few homes in the parish that are not in some measure affected by the moral chaos which is rampant. It is not possible to-day to say of any parish or any home that it is entirely secure from disrupting influences. The Enrolling Member is not running a mother's meeting where a little sewing, a chapter read from a story and a cup of tea served to pass a pleasant hour. In the hour or hour and a half at her disposal, monthly, fortnightly or weekly, she has the chance to instruct, and to entertain, to break down barriers and to build up securities, to make Mothers' Union membership a vital fellowship, and to make membership in the Church the most vital matter of all. From that regular hour and a half so much can come if the Enrolling Member brings love and method and understanding to her work. Her touch on every home and family may well galvanize into life things that were slowly dying. And she can take comfort in the thought that what happens for good in the homes of the members whom she knows in the branch is indeed good. Such quiet influence spreads and permeates. Every marriage, every baptism, every confirmation brings the branch into personal touch with the Church. The branch can become a bulwark of right thinking and living. The more the Enrolling Member puts into the branch the more will the members give out. To-day's threats to home life cannot be kept away from any parish, but they can be met by knowledge, often by corporate action and always by loyalty and fellowship exercised wisely through the work done by the Mothers' Union branch.

The Branch Committee.

She will, of course, have a branch committee. One elected member to every ten members of the branch is the ratio recommended. Three committee members to retire in rotation every three years, not to be eligible for election for another three years is an excellent rule to make. It is adopted by many branches, and it avoids the danger of the same

committee remaining on year after year. The Enrolling Member will magnify such offices as Branch Secretary and Branch Treasurer. One member should be put in charge of the *Journal* distribution and left free to choose her own distributors. Another young committee member should be given responsibility for looking after new young members. Where there is a Young Wives' Group the Leader will of course be a member of the committee. Another member might well spread interest in the Mothers' Union overseas work, and another could be responsible for Literature and Book Stalls or for sick members and so on. The Enrolling Member may find it irksome to delegate work like this, and prefer to run the branch herself in every detail. This may possibly be easier, but it is bad for the branch. The District Nurse, Sunday School Superintendent and the Moral Welfare Worker may well be co-opted on to the committee.

The Enrolling Member will be wise to use her committee, gaining their confidence and asking their help. Members can collect the tribute and distribute notices. A change of district for distributors is from time to time advantageous. "Grumps" under one distributor may start paying up arrears under a new distributor or take the *Journal* again after dropping it because the price went up! The previous distributor having said "It was a pity it was up," but never explaining why.

Preparation for Membership.

The most important duty of the Enrolling Member is the personal preparation of probationers for membership. It must be a real instruction on the Three Objects—and on the card of membership—a general preparation of two or three together if possible, but there must also be personal talks to each future member in which the obligations are firmly presented. The first Object must be explained, not glossed over. Unfortunately in the past such careful instruction has not always been given, and we have had members complaining bitterly that they had not understood what the first Object meant when later on some grave problem arose

in their own life, or in the life of the branch. It is not enough to say "the Mothers' Union does not approve of divorce." The Enrolling Member must *know why*; she must have been at pains to read round the subject in the simple direct literature the Mothers' Union can provide. This is an absolutely vital part of her work. To convince someone of the life-long relationship of marriage is not only a grave responsibility but a deep spiritual trust. The Enrolling Member arranges for the Admission Service in church to be taken by the incumbent, and also for any other services to be held for the Mothers' Union branch.

Commendations.

Commendation of members to another branch when they leave the parish is a responsibility not always observed. Commendation forms should be kept at hand. Also members commended from another branch should be warmly welcomed and befriended. It is difficult to know how Enrolling Members can manage without not only their Diocesan Handbook, but without the Official Handbook in the familiar red cover. Now that the price of the latter has risen it may be that one copy could be bought by the deanery and held by the Deanery Secretary, so that Enrolling Members could obtain addresses.

Programme Planning.

There is one vitally important work which is the responsibility of the Enrolling Member and that is the planning of an attractive branch programme. In this she should have the help of her committee. The Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Speakers Representative can also be consulted. It may be found that the branch can join in some course of talks being given in a neighbouring branch, or a branch can join with them and save on the speakers' expenses. Some diocesan meeting with an important speaker can be added to the branch programme. Deanery functions should be inserted on the programme. Leaflets about programme planning can be obtained from Mary Sumner House. It is of immense importance to plan wisely, and with all the members in mind.

Much depends on whether the branch meets monthly or weekly or fortnightly. Lent can always be observed by special instructions, Mothering Sunday calls for its special service, the Festival of the Annunciation has its corporate Communion, Christmas its branch party and perhaps a Nativity Play. There may be a summer outing or a garden meeting with a speaker, and perhaps a pageant. Then there are practical subjects closely connected with the members' lives, *The Child and the Cinema*, *Sunday in the Home*, *Children's Prayers*, *The Growing-up Child*, *Marriage To-day*, and so on. An evening meeting for fathers and mothers, or for the young members who cannot come to afternoon meetings, a "Bring and Buy" Sale for branch funds, help to be given in the parish overseas work, a discussion afternoon, and, when possible, an annual Quiet Day or Afternoon make welcome changes in the programme. The more secular subjects can be balanced with some definite instruction in the Church's Faith and the Mothers' Union. A printed programme circulated to each member is an attractive part of the branch organization. It makes an appeal to the members, also some of the meetings can well be *open* to their friends, and indeed should be.

There is no dearth of speakers, and there is no question of trying to compete with the other organizations for women. All subjects connected with home and children come within the orbit of the Mothers' Union. The spiritual background is there even if not implied in the title. A well-arranged meeting, flowers, a *small* bookstall, arrangements for children, an attractive tea, however simple, courage to be original, perhaps a break for a competition and the Mothers' Union afternoon becomes a re-creation in the lives of the members. But this does not happen without thought and planning and a live committee.

Finance.

Mothers' Union finance should be made interesting to the members. They should know what happens to their tribute money. The *Workers' Paper* and the Diocesan Cover of the *Journal* often have financial statements or paragraphs which should be explained to the members.

The Mothers' Union tribute, plus the payment for the *Journal*, comes to a ridiculously small sum considering what the member gains. For example, three shillings a year is threepence a month, and less than a half-penny a week. Who can say they cannot afford to join the Mothers' Union ?

Literature.

The branch should have a small stock of literature for sale, and speakers should be asked if they would like any special literature ordered before they come. Some of the marriage literature can be bought by the branch, and lent to those who ask for such counsel and knowledge in some sudden difficulty. The Enrolling Member should make all the Mothers' Union machinery understandable to the members.

The Enrolling Member Herself.

So much rests on the power and courage of the Enrolling Member. She cannot give out what she has not taken in. Fortunately, all her own work in her home and, if she is the wife of the vicar, in the parish makes her the more fit to control the branch. She will find that much rests on her ability to achieve a happy personal relationship with her members, relationships made in love and prayer. From the annual reports to the visiting, from the branch party to the formation of a Prayer Group, from presiding over the branch committee to introducing the Speaker (and with herself speaking from time to time to her own members), each detail must be carried out thoroughly and faithfully. The word "visiting" opens up a vista of difficulties and often a despairing sense of failure. Some visiting can be done by committee members, but in the end it is the Enrolling Member who can achieve the most by a personal visit. Some of the members' houses she will pass many times so they can easily be called upon, and most are probably within reach, so if a little planning is brought to bear, a few visits every week *can be paid*. It may need courage to visit the disgruntled and those who are full of opposition, or talk of "what the branch *used to be*," or who are failing in some way in their membership, but such courage is a responsibility of office. The day when the Enrolling Member passes by the friendly door and knocks on the less

friendly one may well bring blessings. "A house-going Enrolling Member means a meeting-going branch" is perfectly true, and tiredness and that feeling of inadequacy are all overcome by the happiness each visit brings. To accomplish this in an already busy life needs discipline and patience; nothing can be hurried, but the reward of such stewardship is often beyond belief.

The Young Wives' Group.

The relationship of the branch to the group (where there is one) is a matter of tremendous importance. The Enrolling Member may be one who through the Infant School and Sunday School has no difficulty in attracting the young mothers into the branch. She may have from time to time special meetings in the evening for them, or a discussion. She may be able to keep her young, her middle aged and her elderly members working quite happily together. There are many such, and they are to be congratulated. Latterly, with the formation of the Young Members' Department, the emphasis has been on the Young Wives' Group. This is open to all young wives and mothers who may, or may not, be eligible to join the Mothers' Union after preparation. The relationship of the Enrolling Member and the Group Leader is therefore immensely important. The making of the branch programme and the group programme for the year should be done in consultation. Some branch functions are obviously open to members of the group, and should appear on the group programme. The present rule is that the Group Leader should be a young member of the Mothers' Union, or one who is desirous to join, eligible to do so, and under preparation for membership. It is obvious that the branch programme must be attractive to the young who come into the branch. They should be welcomed by the older members, given certain responsibilities, and some of them co-opted on to the branch committee, and in all ways allowed outlets for their ideas and enthusiasms. A young mother newly admitted to a branch revolutionized the branch meeting simply by rearranging the tea at small tables and giving a party feeling to what had been a very teacup and bun affair for many years. There must be consideration on both sides, and, above all,

good manners. An attractive programme in the branch will do good all round, but the greatest good will come from the fellowship of the Enrolling Member and the Group Leader.

Can they belong to both?

A demand to stay on in the group after admission to membership would, if allowed, turn the group into a very much older group than it was formed to be, and also unwieldy in size and therefore its usefulness minimized. There must be, however, give and take on both sides. *The branch must keep young in outlook and in its programme, and the group must keep really young in age.* A sense of competition between the branch and the group is fatal, and never occurs if the Enrolling Member and the Group Leader work together. Both will come to, and help with, each other's special parties and functions.

Evangelisation.

The Mothers' Union has been doing evangelistic work from its very start; and now that one of the terms of reference for the groups is that they should bring young wives into the Church, evangelisation is much in the forefront of branches and groups. Obviously in earlier days on a smaller scale, since rank materialism had not assumed its present tragic growth, but the Mothers' Union did evangelize and still does. *Every proper preparation for membership is evangelistic work.* To-day of course the group working in a large housing estate has tremendous scope, and groups can do and are doing most valuable work. They pass on to the clergy those young women whom they have interested in the Church and the Church's teaching and worship. There may of course be some who come into the group who can never join the Mothers' Union because of the first object. They will at least find good fellowship and help. One such said recently "I do not want my children to make the muddle I have made, and I am learning how to teach them." There is much literature put out for the Young Members' Department, but it is always important to remember that all Young Wives' Groups are sponsored by the Mothers' Union and are part of its organization.

Where there is a close touch between the Diocesan Representative of the Young Members' Department and the Diocesan President, where youth is represented on the Deanery and Branch Committee and where the Group Leader and Enrolling Member work in understanding and fellowship in the branch there is tremendous and encouraging hope for the future of the Mothers' Union and the strengthening of Church life. "Evangelists all" should be the watchword, "tellers of good news" (to use the old description of an evangelist) to those who makes homes in the community of the parish.

The Mothers' Union and Marriage.

There is one vital piece of evangelistic work which the Enrolling Member and the Group Leader can never ignore. They must themselves be absolutely sound on the first object. When they say "the Mothers' Union doesn't admit divorced women, or those who have married divorced men" they must know why they say it and what it all means. They must be able to give a reason for the faith that is in them, and that means knowledge. There are some excellent leaflets now available in which the position is clearly stated. Where the Christian standard of marriage to-day is so often degraded and denied, the Deanery Presiding Member and the Enrolling Member must by lip and by life, set forward all the things concerning the sacrament of marriage. They must learn to give reasons wisely and simply, and without fear or favour. No crisis to-day is greater than this, and the Mothers' Union trumpet must blow no uncertain note.

Postscript.

There are two basic facts in the business of the branch and the young. The branch must prepare to welcome the young into its fellowship whether they come in through the work of the Enrolling Member or through a Group. The ultimate responsibility rests on the Mothers' Union Enrolling Member for increasing the membership of her branch, whether she plans it through a group and the co-operative work of a Group Leader, or whether she and her branch

committee face the problem without a group. In the branch the young must be given scope for their ideas, and use for their powers, which they may have learned to develop in a group.

On the other hand the Group, whilst it gives these young wives and mothers recreation and amusement must balance this by instruction not only on the Faith but on life to-day. For those who desire to come into the Mothers' Union it must give real preparation, a preparation in which both the Group Leader and the Enrolling Member should take part. Those who have learned to mix easily in the group will not find it difficult to mix easily in a welcoming branch. This is a responsibility resting on both branch and group where a group exists. The too glib use of the word pagan for those outside the worship of the Church does not always help matters in these days when the Mothers' Union faces the New Towns and the building areas and housing estates. They must always be faced in loving humility, and a quiet determination to build therein the City of God.

Do the Presiding Members and the Enrolling Members who read this feel "Oh dear, it all seems to depend on me"? It *does*. But if they depend on God, then all these problems are not insuperable, but they can be resolved to the strengthening and deepening of the whole work of the Mothers' Union, and the safeguarding of the nation's home life. Not one bit of the Mothers' Union machinery of organization can be left untended, unoiled or unused. It all works to one end, to the helping, safeguarding, teaching and encouraging of *each individual member*, to God's Great Glory. Coming generations of wives and mothers may well call down blessings on those who in face of *to-day's* grave difficulties are privileged to uphold the sanctity of marriage, to awaken in all mothers a sense of their great responsibilities, and to organize in every place a band of mothers who will unite in prayer and seek by their own example to lead their families in purity and holiness of life.

Literature Recommended.

1. Notes on the History of the Constitution of the Mothers' Union 2d.
2. A Short Summary and Notes on the History of the Constitution of the Mothers' Union ... 6d.
3. The National Importance of the Mothers' Union 1d.
4. Information about the Mothers' Union 2d.
5. Personal Talk on the Mothers' Union Card of Membership 4d.
6. Entertainments within the Mothers' Union ... 2d.
7. The Tribute : What is it ? Why is it raised ? Where does it go ? All the Answers ... 1d.
8. The Aim of the Mothers' Union in the World Today 2d.
9. The Work of the Watch and Social Problems Committee 4d.
10. What is the Watch and Social Problems Committee 6d.
11. The Young Wives' Group—Its Purpose and Plan 1d.
12. Points for Group Leaders 4d.
13. Suggestions for Branch and Group Programmes 4d.
14. The Work of the Overseas Department ... 4d.
15. The Wave of Prayer 1½d.
16. What does Evangelism really mean ? 2d.
17. The Way of Evangelism in and through the Mothers' Union 8d.
18. Towards Recovery of Belief 4d.

