

Some Home Truths for Aberdonians.

DEAR EDITOR,

Whatever we Aberdonians may be lacking in, it is certainly not self-esteem. When we read of underpaid labour and sweating as they exist in the wicked south we are prone to flatter ourselves that our hands are clean as far as they are concerned. But are we free from those modern iniquities? Well, let me give you some instances that have come under my own observation. Some time ago I happened to become acquainted with a young woman of good education and refined manners. She was employed as a clerk in an accountant's office, and her duties constituted skilled labour usually performed by a man. That she was thoroughly capable I had ample evidence, and yet she was paid the magnificent salary of 8/- weekly! Think of it! 8/- weekly for doing work which, if performed by a man, would have earned not less than three times that amount. You may ask, why did she submit to being so shamefully underpaid? The reasons are not far to seek. Her mother was a widow, and the girl was afraid of losing even this weekly pittance. Besides she was naturally of a diffident nature, and having no influential backing did not have the courage to assert herself. But why did her employer thus meanly take advantage of the girl's circumstances? Is any language too strong to condemn such sweating by a man in a responsible position in life?

Here is another instance. A young girl, who had just finished a training in typewriting and shorthand, applied for a situation as a clerk. In this case the duties were fairly heavy and the hours long. The intending employer, after learning from the girl that her mother was a widow who sorely needed the assistance of her daughter's earnings, offered the applicant—what think you? 3/- weekly! 3/- weekly because he fancied that the applicant, being in straitened circumstances, would probably jump at any offer. In this case the would-be employer is a well-known public man.

There is no need to multiply cases, but surely these two instances are in themselves sufficient to rouse the indignation of every right thinking person. They are sufficient to bring home to us that there is much injustice in our midst. They are sufficient to make us women feel it is time we were enquiring into some of these matters in the hope that we might bring about reform, even if it could not be done in any other way than by bringing it before the public. When will Aberdonians waken up from their smug complacency and realise that many of them are unjustly treating the widow and the orphan, and grinding the faces of the poor.

JUSTICE.

ADVICE TO SUFFRAGISTS.—Never contradict a politician. Give him time; he'll contradict himself.