

NEW PROFESSION FOR WOMEN

Items taken from Foreign News Bureau material submitted
by Miss Nickola

In July, 1916, factory police work for women was introduced, and daily demands for the women officials are coming in from factories in all parts of the United Kingdom. Since that time the women have been tried out and found to be courageous and cool in times of danger, and endowed with much tact and discretion. In one of the factories where the women have displaced entirely the men police, civil and military, several thousand women are employed in the manufacture and handling of some of the most dangerous explosives of the war. When there is an air raid these women police clear the factory of all employes and are left with the firemen in sole charge of the place. Their work is to stand guard at the sheds and powder magazines, and not a policewoman has ever shirked her dangerous duty. The cost of training the women is supplied by people interested in the movement.

As for the personal requirements of the patrol women, whether voluntary or paid, the enterprise is likely to be seriously handicapped at the start if the women selected for the work go into it in a spirit of intrusive and over-zealous supervision of the proprieties, as distinguished from the moralities. The chief welfare worker of Woolwich Arsenal, responsible for the well-being of 20,000 women (she has been decorated by the Crown for this) said recently that for the girls in her charge a man's arm around the waist meant just about what a handshake did in another rank of life; it had no

especial significance. She said that she had instructed her assistants at the dances and concerts, not to take any notice if a girl let a man put his arm around her waist - but to stop it if there were two! This recognition of the existence of almost as many standards of propriety of conduct, (not of morality) as there are classes of society, and an honest and friendly disposition to fall in with the standards of the class - seeing to it that the girls uphold these - indicates pretty well the tone of the whole movement. A police officer giving the qualifications for a successful policewoman in munition towns, said that beside the other requisites she should certainly have "a way with the girls". If she gives the impression that she is prying into their personal affairs beyond the point that public order dictates, she is going to be taken out of office very soon.